SPORTS / A28

GMA exhorts SEAG athletes to bring home overall title

WORLD / A26

Pakistan hits back at its suspension from 53-nation Commonwealth

METRO / A23

DOJ orders filing of estafa raps vs 2 Makati Med docs over P28-M investment

PROPERTY / B2-1

When 'ready for occupancy' is nothing but a come-on; to complain, call HLURB

Amazon.com unveils $400 e-book reader

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WASHINGTON—Internet retailer Amazon.com has unveiled a $400 (P17,000) e-book reader that downloads books, magazines and newspapers to readable

AMAZON.COM/A10

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Saturday, November 24, 2007 ★★ 14 sections / Vol. 22 / No. 349 P18 website: www.inquirer.net

Quirky, original, catchy ideas at Ad Congress

By Marlet D. Salazar and Ansbert Joaquin

SUBIC BAY FREEPORT ZONE—QUIRKY, original, insightful, catchy. More importantly, it sells.

This was how most advertising ideas have evolved over the years—and the 20th Philippine Advertising Congress, which

QUIRKY/A12

Bulacan village makes clean break from its filthy past

By TJ Burgonio

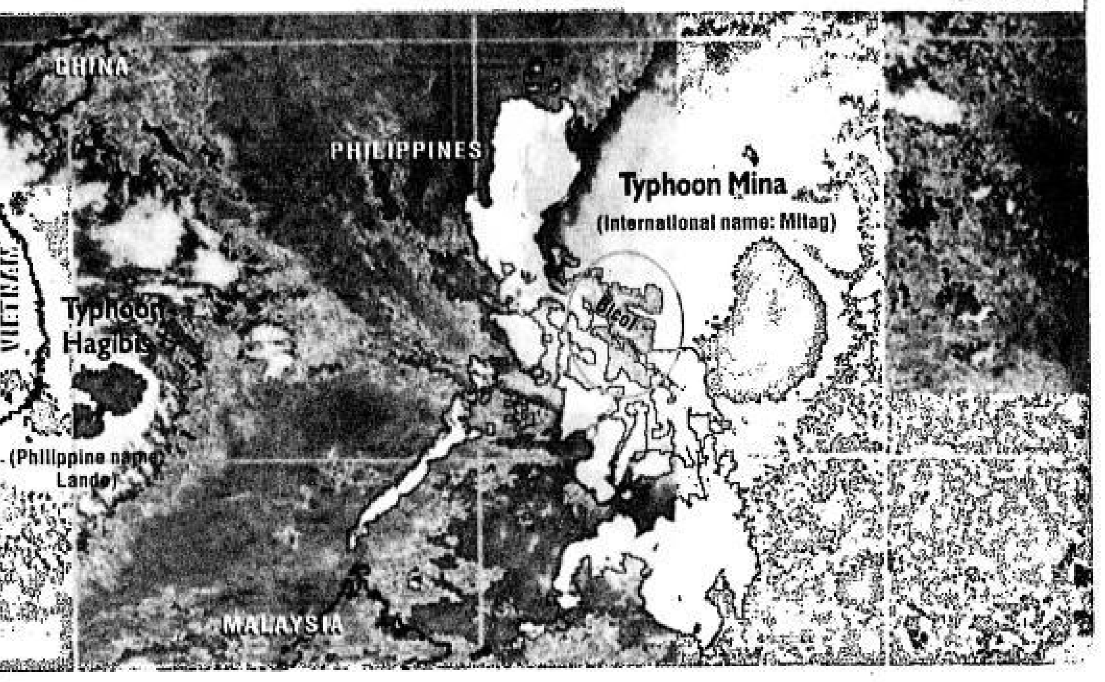
GUIGUINTO, BULACAN—A BARANGAY here has made a clean break from its filthy past and has transformed itself into an eco-friendly hub.

In a province that is home to two of the world's most polluted places, Barangay Tuktukan with a population of 12,000 people, has established itself as an efficient, eco-friendly center of solid waste management.

Since getting a dumpsite shut down in 2004, the officials and residents have been composting their wastes, and turning

BULACAN/A17

NIÑO JESUS ORBETA/INQUIRER SOUTHERN LUZON



SATTELITE PHOTO at (right) of severe Tropical Storm "Mina" approaching Catanduanes. Pagasa forecasts Mina to be 180 km east of Virac at 10 this morning. (Above) Residents of Barangay Maroroy in Daraga, Albay, reinforce their roof.

'Mina' roars toward Bicol

Massive evacuation before storm called 'unprecedented'

By Jaymee Gamil and Ephraim Aguilar, *Inquirer Southern Luzon*
and TJ Burgonio *in Manila*

WITH "MINA" THREATENING to turn into a supertyphoon, tens of thousands of people yesterday streamed into schoolhouses, barangay halls and church grounds in the Bicol region to avoid its wrath.

"This is an unprecedented move," Albay Gov. Joey Salceda said of the massive evacuation. "While before, evacuation was being done during and after the typhoon had struck, now we are doing it days before the typhoon reaches us."

Mina roared toward Bicol with sustained winds of 175 kph and gustiness of up to 210 kph, prompting warnings from the weather bureau that it could wreak heavy damage once it landed.

A typhoon with maximum winds of 215 kph is classified as a supertyphoon.

"It looks headed in that direction," Pagasa weather branch chief Nathaniel Cruz said, when asked if Mina could develop into a supertyphoon like "Reming" that killed 734 people and caused massive damage in Bicol and Southern Tagalog in November last year.

MINA ROARS/A17

Arandurugan

"PREEMPTIVE EVACUATION": That has been the order of President Arroyo in the areas threatened by "Mina." Residents from two barangays in Guinobatan, Albay, had been safely sheltered at the town's social hall a day or two before the howler was expected to do its worst.

NIÑO JESUS ORBETA/INQUIRER SOUTHERN LUZON

Solons to Teves: Explain 'hasty' PNOC-EDC sale

By Gil Cabacungan Jr.

THE JOINT CONGRESSIONAL POWER Commission (JCPC) has asked Finance Secretary Margarito Teves to defer the awarding of 60 percent of Philippine National Oil Co.-Energy Development Corp. until he appears in the Senate to explain the haste in pursuing the bidding without getting the necessary clearance. *(See related story in Business, Page B3.)*

The majority block in PNOC-EDC was bid out last Nov. 21 with Red Vulcan Hodings led by the Lopez-owned First Gen Corp. giving the highest offer of P58.5 billion. The closing date of the sale is set on Nov. 30 but the JCPC wants Teves to go to a Senate hearing on Dec. 13 before closing the deal.

"The JCPC wishes that you would

SOLONS/A8

Court asked to stop Transco bidding

By Doris C. Dumlao

A CONSORTIUM LED BY NICKEL mining businessman Salvador Zamora II and former Finance Secretary Roberto de Ocampo has gone to court to protest the alleged "foul play" in the privatization of the multi-billion-dollar National Transmission Corp. (Transco).

Zamora and Ocampo's La Costa consortium, which lost in the pre-qualification bidding conducted by the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. (PSALM), yesterday asked the Makati Regional Trial Court to stop a rescheduled rebidding on Dec. 12 of the state-owned power sector grid operator.

In its petition, the consortium accused PSALM and its president, Jose Ibazeta, among others, of violating the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act when they disqualified La Costa from participating in the bidding for the Transco concession.

"If defendants, and their representatives or agents, are not enjoined from conducting the bidding process .... the public would be deprived of the chance of obtaining an additional bid for the concession of Transco, thereby depriving the public of a real chance to get the highest bid possible," the petition said.

La Costa, which claims to be willing to bid for Transco for as much as $6 billion, or double the lone bid price during the last failed bidding in February, asked the court to prevent the respondents from proceeding with the public bidding without La Costa being al-

COURT/A8

Church leaders: GMA government morally bankrupt

By Beverly T. Natividad

A BROAD FRONT OF CHURCH AND civic leaders yesterday condemned the Arroyo administration as "a morally bankrupt government" and said it was time for Filipinos to unite to bring about genuine change.

In a statement, Solidarity Philippines denounced political killings, other human rights abuses and what it

CHURCH/A8

Absurd, says Noynoy on claim Danding was mastermind

By Carla P. Gomez and Michael Lim Ubac

THE SON AND NAMESAKE OF BENIGno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr. thinks it is absurd that his uncle, tycoon Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco, is again being accused of masterminding his father's assassination in 1983.

The accusation, first made in 2003, is even more absurd today, Sen. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III said yesterday on the phone. He said it appeared that someone was creating a false trail to lay the blame on Cojuangco, a first cousin of his mother, former President Corazon Aquino.

The senator was reacting to the claim of ex-soldier Pablo Martinez, newly pardoned and released from a life sentence for the Aquino assassination, that it was Cojuangco who had ordered it.

Martinez, in an interview aired Thursday night over ABS-CBN, said he had spoken with Cojuangco's men involved in the assassination, and that the men had told him that Cojuangco gave them the order.

"Ang sabi ko sa kanila kasi, ang tanong ko sa kanila, 'Kanino ba kayo

ABSURD/A10

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Bicol Region, Southern Luzon including Polillo Island, Marinduque, Romblon, Masbate and Northern Samar will experience stormy weather. The rest of Southern Luzon, Isabela, Quirino, Aurora, the rest of Samar provinces, Aklan, Capiz and Northern Leyte will have rains and gusty winds and the coastal waters along these areas will be moderate to rough. The rest of Luzon and Visayas will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms.

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Gusty Winds	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

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Second
FRONT PAGE

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Senate gives Jpepa reprieve

Committee hearings extended to make room for 'rectification'

By Dona Pazzibugan and Jerome Aning

THE SENATE HAS EXTENDED the committee hearings into the proposed economic agreement with Japan so that plenary debate on its ratification may well be held in the new year.

The Senate has thus given government a chance to explain better the merits of the Japan-Philippine Economic Partnership Agreement (Jpepa) which groups opposed to the pact have criticized as unconstitutional and disadvantageous to the country in past hearings.

Sen. Manuel Roxas II, chair of the Senate trade and commerce committee, yesterday announced that two more hearings on the Jpepa have been scheduled. The next hearing will focus on the treaty's impact on the country's agricultural trade with Japan.

Roxas said that since the budget will be taking up much of the remaining time of the Senate this year, plenary debates on the Jpepa may not begin until next year though he said the issue will continue to be discussed by the senators among themselves.

Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago, chair of the Senate foreign relations committee, originally set a timetable to end the committee hearings on the Jpepa by November and schedule the plenary debate by December.

But last week Santiago voiced some doubt that the treaty would be ratified in its present form, and suggested that the document be accompanied by a "supplemental agreement" to address supposed constitutional violations, such as the alleged grant of parity rights to Japanese investors.

The treaty has to be ratified by a majority vote of the 23-person Senate.

Roxas yesterday pronounced himself satisfied with the answers given by the government panel on the likely impact of the lifting of tariff duties on Japanese exports to the country and on Philippine exports to Japan.

"The lower tariffs will not be a big benefit for us since most of our trade [exports] to Japan already enjoy zero-percent tariff. But what came out in this hearing is that companies could plan better, invest more if they are assured of zero tariff," he said.

In previous hearings, Roxas was repeatedly dismayed by the government's failure to quantify the trade advantages and disadvantages of the treaty.

He said they would hold further hearings if two hearings are not enough to satisfy the senators' questions.

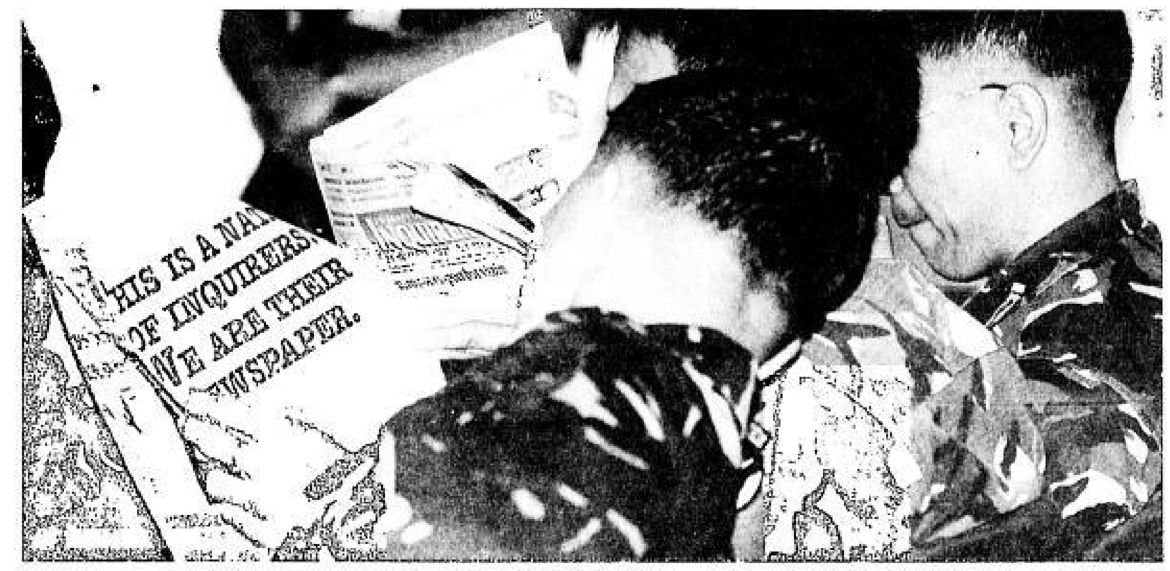
He said the Senate has to be careful in ratifying the Jpepa since, as the country's first bilateral trade treaty outside the World Trade Organization, it would serve as a baseline for other bilateral trade treaties.

A national coalition of farmers, rural developers, women, urban poor and labor groups advocating food sovereignty yesterday said no amount of renegotiation can "sweeten a rotten deal," referring to the Jpepa.

The Task Force on Food Sovereignty, which advocates reforms in the country's trade and agriculture policies, spokesperson Arze Glipo accused the Senate of trying to set the stage for the government panel "to recover from its gross failure to explain the merits of the treaty" in the previous six hearings.

The TFFS told the Senate hearing that the defects of the trade treaty were "incurable."

"The Senate can conduct public hearings for as long as it can. It can invite as many representatives from the executive as possible. But nothing can sweeten a deal as rotten as the Jpepa," Glipo said in a statement.



Rebel soldiers undergoing court-martial read the papers before the start of yesterday's hearing. JOAN BONDOC

Tanay court-martial deferred

By Tarra Quismundo

CAMP CAPINPIN, TANAY—THE military tribunal yesterday deferred court-martial proceedings against the Marine and Army officers charged with involvement in the February 2006 failed coup after defense lawyers complained that they were not officially informed of the court date.

The hearing lasted no more than 15 minutes in the heavily guarded courtroom after the seven-member panel granted a defense motion to adjourn.

"Apparently, deliberately, we were not given notices of the hearing. There was no announcement in court. And assuming that there was a public announcement, we need official notice of the schedule," said defense lawyer Vicente Verdadero.

The court granted the motion over the objections of the opposition of the prosecution panel which contended that yesterday's court date had been agreed in the last hearing.

"All lawyers were aware" that the Tanay hearings are to be held every Friday and that the Nov. 23 date had been agreed in previous proceedings.

But defense lawyers maintained that there was no such agreement.

Trixie Angeles, another defense lawyer, said the defense objected to the weekly schedule as it "deprives the defense of the accused."

A five-minute recess was called after the exchange. When the hearing resumed, the panel granted the motion and scheduled a hearing for Dec. 7. The prosecution was also ordered to send written notices to the defense three days before the hearing date.

Verdadero said the accused military officers could not believe that their motion was granted. "They were used to being denied," he said.

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With 512MB SD, 10 Sheets Inkjet Paper, Nikon Body Hug Tee, Photobook, and Camera Case	With 1GB SD, 10 Sheets Inkjet Paper, Photobook, and Nikon Body Hug Tee	With 512MB SD, 10 Sheets Inkjet Paper, Photobook, and Nikon Body Hug Tee	With 512MB SD, 10 Sheets Inkjet Paper, Nikon Body Hug Tee, Photobook, and Camera Case	With 512MB SD, 10 Sheets Inkjet Paper, Nikon Body Hug Tee, Photobook, and Camera Case	With 512MB SD, 10 Sheets Inkjet Paper, Nikon Body Hug Tee, Photobook, and Camera Case	With 512MB SD, 10 Sheets Inkjet Paper, Nikon Body Hug Tee, Photobook, and Camera Case

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WHAT'S INSIDE

LOREN TAKES swipe at Teves over taxes for seniors /A4

BINAY, solon hit PNP findings on Glorietta /A6

NOLI backs Pinay 'sex slaves' in case /A6

Who has final say on suspension of classes?

By Jerry E. Esplanada

WHICH GOVERNMENT AGENCY HAS the final say on the suspension of classes in times of disasters or calamities—the Department of Education or the Department of National Defense?

Both agencies assert this is their function.

This prompted DepEd insiders to ask the Office of the President to "make the proper clarifications."

Shortly before DepEd Secretary Jesli A. Lapus left for Vietnam to attend the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) Education Forum a few days ago, he reiterated the agency's guidelines on the suspension of classes to "improve coordination among concerned agencies on the timely announcement of suspension of classes."

The guidelines are covered by DepEd Order No. 28, issued two years ago by the education department.

Still in force

Acting DepEd Secretary Teodosio Sangil Jr. yesterday told the INQUIRER the directive was "still in force."

"We have yet to receive any order from the higher-ups nullifying the department's powers to suspend classes...*Malinaw itong pinanghahawakan naming* order (The order is clear)," Sangil said.

The DND, on the other hand, is backed by Administrative Order No. 196 which President Macapagal-Arroyo issued on Sept. 11.

AO 196 supposedly empowers Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro, also concurrent chair of the National Disaster Coordinating Council (NDCC), to "suspend classes at any or all levels nationwide as well as in specific localities during times of disaster or calamities, whether natural or man-made."

These include typhoons, earthquakes, floods, conflagrations and the like.

According to the President, "the secretary of national defense as concurrent chairman of the NDCC is in the best position to readily assess whether there is a need to suspend classes in times of disasters or calamities."

Teodoro is "also authorized to direct all the appropriate agencies for the implementation of the suspension of classes," she said.

Earlier, announcements by the DepEd and the Commission on Higher Education (CHEd) on the suspension of classes caught many students either already in school or on their way there.

Officials of both agencies recently met with Metro Manila mayors to discuss existing guidelines covering the suspension of classes but nothing came out of the meeting.

JDV preparing to go after ethics accuser

By Christian V. Esguerra

FULLY EXPECTING THE HOUSE ethics committee to junk the ethics complaint against him, Speaker Jose de Venecia is now considering filing a civil suit against lawyer Roel Pulido who filed the charges.

"The Speaker will go after him [Pulido]," said De Venecia's lawyer, Raul Lambino, in a phone interview yesterday.

He said the constitutional provision against the filing of a malicious complaint would be the basis of the Speaker's suit. De Venecia will probably also ask for moral damages, he said.

The De Venecia camp is convinced that Pulido's complaint, seen in the context of Pulido's failed impeachment case against President Macapagal-Arroyo that mentioned the Speaker more frequently than it cited the respondent, was not legitimate.

Lambino said the ethics complaint could easily be dismissed on the ground that the committee chaired by Romblon Rep. Eleandro Madrona lacked jurisdiction over the case.

Under the House rules, the ethics committee cannot investigate any allegations of wrongdoing by a member of the chamber which did not take place in the present Congress, he said.

Pulido charged that De Venecia was liable for violations of the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Government Officials and Employees when Congress, during his term in 1995 and 1997, awarded radio paging and broadband services franchises to the Multi-Media Telephony Inc., a company headed by his son Jose de Venecia III.

Finding the complaint valid in "form and content," the ethics committee gave the Speaker 10 days from Nov. 21 to reply to the allegations.

Lambino said De Venecia will not just raise the issue of jurisdiction in responding to the complaint.

"We are preparing a very exhaustive answer with all the available defense on the issue of jurisdiction and cause of action and constitutional and legal provisions," he said.

"We want to prove that Pulido is really wrong, not just on the basis of lack of jurisdiction," he said, adding that De Venecia's "point-by-point" reply will be submitted either on Tuesday or Wednesday.

Another item in De Venecia's legal counterattack is the fact that Pulido supposedly never mentioned anything about any "disorderly behavior" on the part of the Speaker throughout the eight-page complaint.

Without this "very essence of an ethics complaint," Pulido has no chance of nailing De Venecia, according to Lambino.

If the committee investigation finds that he had filed a malicious complaint, Pulido could also be disbarred, he said.

"It is up to Speaker if he wants to file such a complaint," said Lambino.

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Senate set to probe WB loan fiasco

VILLAR

THE SENATE WILL begin on Monday its investigation of the World Bank's suspension of a corruption-riddled $232-million loan to the Philippines despite belated claims by Malacañang and the multilateral lending body that the financing facility was still under deliberation and has not yet been deferred.

Senate President Manny Villar told dzMM radio that Malacañang and the WB were just "covering up" for the embarrassing situation.

"We have to accept the truth. Let us ask the President and the DBM (Department of Budget and Management) to clear this up," said Villar.

Probe panel

The probe panel will be headed by Sen. Loren Legarda, chair of Senate economic affairs committee, with Sen. Ramon "Bong" Revilla Jr., chair of the committee on public works and highways, as co-chair of the joint committee.

Legarda, Revilla, and Sen. Mar Roxas filed separate bills to look into the loan suspension.

Legarda said that the Senate should proceed with the investigation even if the WB decided to lift the loan suspension because of concerns on corruption that triggered the deferment.

"These are very serious allegations that need to be address. It's like the ZTE probe, we continued our investigation even though the project has already been canceled," said Legarda.

Wall Street Journal

Two days after the Wall Street Journal came out with a story on the WB's suspension of the $232-million loan for phase two of the National Road Improvement and Management Program (NRIMP), the WB claimed on Thursday that loan was actually not suspended since it was still under deliberation by its board pending the report of its Department of Institutional Integrity.

But Villar maintained that the Philippines was "really embarrassed" by this issue which was triggered by the WB's fresh drive against corruption worldwide.

Legarda and two other senators—Sen. Mar Roxas and Ramon "Bong" Revilla Jr.—filed separate resolutions calling for a Senate inquiry into the WB loan.

Loan suspension

Roxas said there was a need to look into the suspension to avert what he called a "credit crunch" that could affect other foreign loans.

"The World Bank report is not a trivial matter considering the huge amount of trust funds earmarked for its Philippine program (it funding at present 23 projects worth $1.28 billion) and the prominent role it plays in promoting anti-poverty programs," said Roxas.

"The Philippines should address this in a sober and systematic manner rather than being quick to put the blame of the alleged 'internal row' among top officials of the World Bank."

Conchita Gesmundo; 84

CONCHITA P. GESMUNDO OF BUSTOS, Bulacan, mother of Philippine Airlines Corporate Communications editor Jona-than P. Gesmundo, died on Thursday at the age of 84.

She is survived by her children Carlos and Evelyn, Giovanni and Yolanda, Jonathan and Edith, Ma. Conchita, and Maricel and Rick, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Her remains lie at Funeraria Paz, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City. Interment is on Sunday, Nov. 25, at Paraiso Memorial Park in San Mateo, Rizal.

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Loren takes swipe at Teves over taxes for seniors

By Gil Cabacungan Jr.

SEN. LOREN LEGARDA YESTERDAY TOOK a swipe at Finance Secretary Margarito Teves for his "skewed priorities" on tax policies after the former solon spurned tax incentives for the Filipino elderly while granting tax cuts to a preferred cigarette maker.

"Who should the government tax more—Filipino senior citizens or the makers of imported cigarette brands like Pall Mall? Whose interest should the government protect more?" asked Legarda, the sponsor of Senate Bill 269 which is seeking to exempt senior citizens from the 20-percent tax imposed on bank savings.

Teves is currently under fire from Congress for reversing a Bureau of Internal Revenue ruling when his department ordered the lowering of the excise tax on Pall Mall cigarettes from P26.06 per pack to P6.74 per pack.

The move has raised eyebrows of lawmakers, especially since the tax cut came at a time when the government has been complaining of falling revenue collections.

Legarda chided Teves, a former representative of Negros province, for coming out with a position paper "demeaning" to senior citizens.

The Department of Finance had submitted a position paper opposing Legarda's bill, claiming that only the rich senior citizens would benefit from tax exemption on their savings because those from low income levels have barely anything to save. The DOF also claimed that the measure was prone to abuse and could lead to further tax leakages.

"I find untenable the premise that only the rich will benefit from this bill, especially with their own admission that they do not have statistics on the savings profile of senior citizens. To claim that our elders have nothing to show after toiling for many decades is a false assumption. This is an insult to all senior citizens," said Legarda.

She also found it hurtful that the DOF would assume that the tax exemption would be exploited by the younger members of the senior citizens' family. "The implication is that senior citizens would allow themselves to be manipulated. But have our senior citizens taken undue advantage of the Senior Citizens Act that granted them such benefits? Do we see senior citizens buying and getting discounts from anything else than those they buy for their own use? The answer is no," said Legarda.

Legarda assured that lawmakers would put adequate safeguard measures to discourage abuses. She said that instead of blocking tax perks granted to senior citizens, the DOF should have suggested measures that would prevent the bill from being exploited.

EU lawmakers laud GMA for tough stance on Burma

A GROUP OF VISITING EUROPEAN PARliament members yesterday praised President Macapagal-Arroyo's tough stance on Burma (Myanmar) and called Manila a "pillar of democracy" in Southeast Asia.

"We would like to underline how much we appreciate the democratic structure of this country," said Hartmut Nassauer, chair of the European parliament's delegation for relations with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

While the Philippines has its own problems, including a wave of extra-judicial killings and perceived corruption, "compared to the other ASEAN member states, to our point of view, the Philippines are a pillar of democracy," he added.

Nassauer, part of a European parliament delegation visiting the country to meet officials and inspect EU-funded development projects, praised Ms Arroyo for speaking out against Myanmar's junta at an ASEAN summit earlier this week.

"I must say we are impressed by the performance of your president in the ASEAN summit in Singapore," Nassauer said.

Ms Arroyo on Wednesday called for the immediate release of Myanmar's opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi, warning that Filipino lawmakers might refuse to ratify ASEAN's first-ever charter until she was freed.

Aung San Suu Kyi has been under house arrest for 12 of the past 18 years.

Nassauer reiterated that the European Parliament would block a proposed free trade deal between the EU and ASEAN unless progress was made on the human rights front in Myanmar, which faced international condemnation after its bloody suppression of anti-government protests in September.

The group also met with Supreme Court Chief Justice Reynato Puno to discuss allegations that military and police elements were behind some of up to 800 murders of leftist dissidents as well as those of a number of provincial journalists.

The issue was "a big problem because it is influencing the picture of the Philippines in the free world," Nassauer said.

The delegation encouraged the government to make progress in this area by prosecuting suspects. *AFP*

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Saturday, November 24, 2007
33rd Week in Ordinary Time
Andrew Dung-Lac and Companions
1st Reading: 1 Mac 6:1-13
Gospel: Luke 20:27-40

Some Sadducees arrived. These people claim that there is no resurrection and they asked Jesus this question, "Master, in the Scripture Moses told us: 'If anyone dies leaving a wife but no children, his brother must take the wife, and the child to be born will be regarded as the child of the deceased man.' Now, there were seven brothers; the first married a wife, but he died without children; and the second and the third took the wife; in fact all seven died leaving no children. Last of all the woman died. On the day of the resurrection, to which of them will the woman be wife? For the seven had her as wife."

And Jesus replied, "Taking husband or wife is proper to people of this world, but for those who are considered worthy of the world to come and of resurrection from the dead, there is no more marriage. Besides, they cannot die for they are like the angels. They too are sons and daughters of God because they are born of the resurrection.

"Yes, the dead will be raised, and even Moses implied it in the passage about the burning bush, where he calls the Lord the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. For he is God of the living and not of the dead, and for him all are alive."

Some teachers of the Law then agreed with Jesus, "Master, you have spoken well." They didn't dare to ask him anything else.

Commentary

The king hears of the revolt of the Israelites and their reclamation of the Temple, destroying the idol he had enshrined. He always saw himself as benign in his rule of others, and as beloved by the people. But now he realizes the evil he has done and he sees himself dying as an alien. Sickness, loss, the ruin of our plans when we are intent on our own designs, often bring pangs of conscience—a bit late, but necessary.

When faced with the reality of death there are those who do not believe in an afterlife, in a judgment and a reckoning of justice for all. The Sadducees (a sect within Judaism at the time of Jesus) were of this confession. And so they approached Jesus to mock him with an absurd case, in the process, they mock the law of marriage as well. And Jesus uses their own scriptures to show them their ignorance and their evil intent, reminding them that God is the God of the living, of their ancestors, of history, and of all time. Do we remember who God is truly and act accordingly?

'No more obstacles to mining'

BAGUIO CITY—PRESIDENT MACAPAgal-Arroyo has ordered Environment Secretary Lito Atienza to make sure no more obstacles bar mining, the country's "most misunderstood" industry.

In his address opening the 54th Mine Safety Conference here on Friday, Environment Undersecretary Eleazar Quinto said the industrial "misdeeds" are partly to blame for the "unsettled debate on sustainable mining."

But since Ms Arroyo assumed office in 2001, the industry has already proven to the world that it does not extract metals "by mining at all costs," he said.

"We are driven [to make certain] that all the projects that come in absorb the social and environmental cost of mining. We shall not waver because that is the key to opening the gates to [industrial] revitalization. That is the only road we shall take," he said in his speech.

Quinto said Ms Arroyo's marching orders to Atienza were anchored on the fact that the mining industry "is back on track."

Glen Noble, Mines and Geosciences Bureau chief of the mineral economics information and publication division, said $879 million in fresh capital had been fueling new mine projects since 2004.

He said government anticipates another $9.5 billion now being anticipated to finance major mine operations between 2008 and 2010.

In 2006, the industry contributed $2.05 billion to that year's total Philippine exports, he said.

In the 1970s, mining represented a quarter of the country's exports.

Mining has never been a large employer, but mine firms have helped boost local employment, Noble said. *Vincent Cabreza, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

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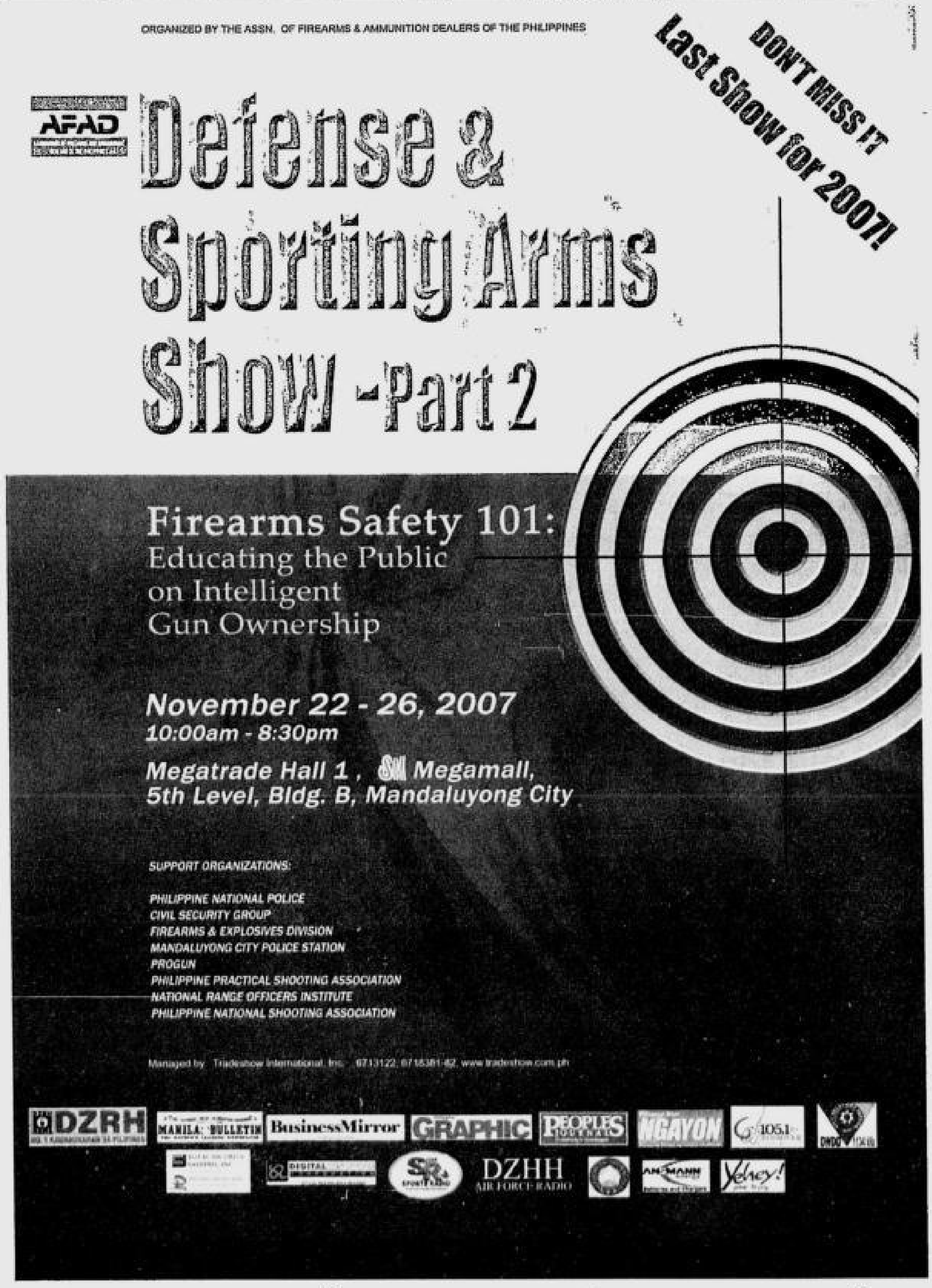
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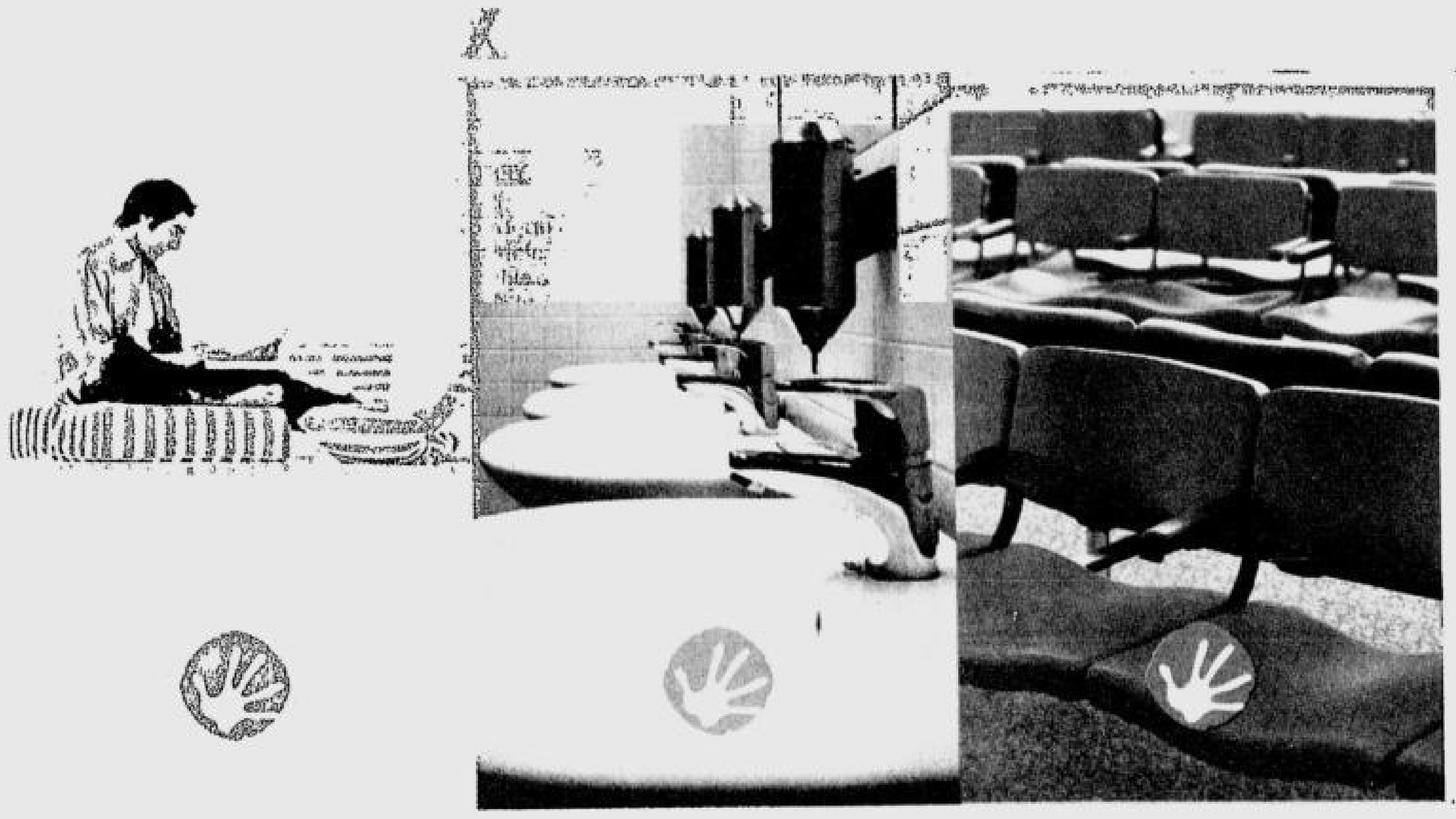

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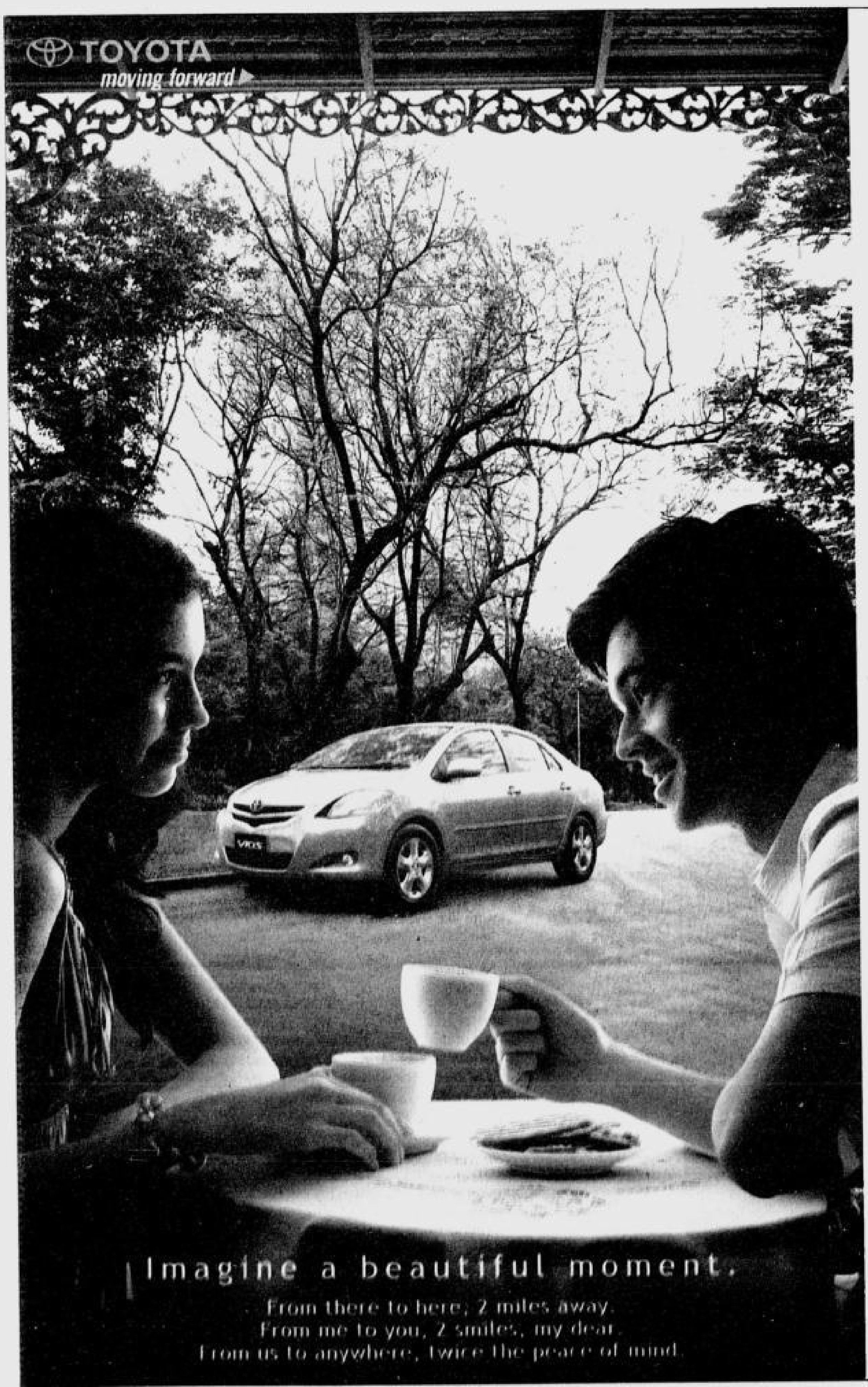

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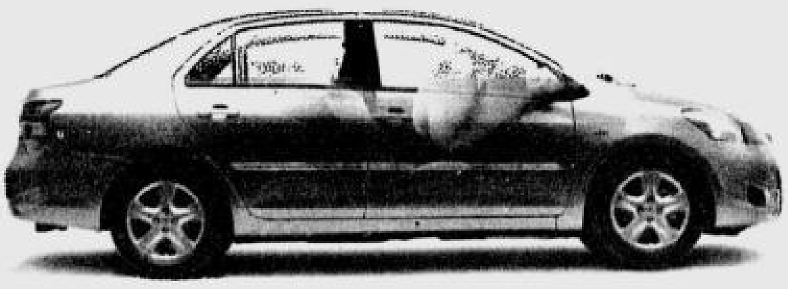

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GLORIETTA BLAST PROBE

Binay, solon hit PNP findings

By DJ Yap

MAKATI MAYOR JEJOMAR BINAY SAID yesterday it was "regrettable" that the Philippine National Police released an "incomplete and far from conclusive report" on the cause of the Oct. 19 explosion at Glorietta 2 shopping mall.

"It would have been better if they released a complete and final report. As things stand, the PNP findings tend to raise more questions instead of providing the public with clear answers," he said in a statement.

The PNP revealed on Thursday part of their official findings regarding the cause of the blast, which killed 11 persons and wounded more than a hundred others. Ruling out a bomb attack, the report concluded that the blast at the mall was caused by an explosion of the septic tank due to a combination of methane and diesel fumes in the basement.

Muntinlupa City Rep. Ruffy Biazon yesterday issued stronger words, saying the PNP's conclusion that the explosion was an accident "may be the result of a sloppy investigation or a product of a desired conclusion."

Biazon, senior vice chair of the Committee on National Defense and Security asserted that the preponderance of evidence was in the favor of a deliberate explosion contesting PNP chief Director General Avelino Razon's statement that much of the evidençe led to the conclusion that it was an accidental explosion.

"Up to this time, the PNP has not satisfactorily explained the presence of RDX found by their own technicians in the blast site. Weeks after the findings were reported to the President in a meeting of the National Security Council, they have not disputed the report but have actually upheld it. But they try to explain the presence of RDX by saying that it is a substance found in deodorants and cosmetics," Biazon said.

Binay said he would rather wait for the police's final report, as well as the findings of the independent commission formed by the Makati Business Development Council, a group of representatives of big businesses based in the city.

Binay, who is also the president of the United Opposition, said he hoped that the reports of the PNP and the independent commission, when taken together, could "provide a complete picture of what really caused the blast."

The mayor also urged the police to support the independent commission, which was formed upon the initiative of the business community.

Binay said Makati City Hall and Ayala Land, the owner of the Glorietta mall, would not in any way take part in the investigation.

Meanwhile, the MBDC's commission on public safety, headed by Brian Lane of the American Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines Inc., reported that it hoped to start its inquiry soon.

PCGG prods Sandigan on $35-M case

By Jocelyn R. Uy

THE PRESIDENTIAL COMMISSION ON Good Government and the Office of the Solicitor General have urged the Sandiganbayan to render a final resolution of the case regarding the $35 million allegedly held by the family of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos in the Panama-based firm Arelma.

"While repeated motions appear to be irksome or irritating, it is not at all our intention to put pressure on the court," the PCGG and the OSG stated in a motion filed with the antigraft court's first division on Wednesday.

"The [government] is only desirous of fulfilling its mandated duty to recover at the soonest possible time ill-gotten wealth that should revert to the Filipino people," the agencies stated.

The $35-million assets of the Marcoses, "uncovered" by the PCGG in 1999 under the account of Panamanian firm Arelma Inc., are also being claimed by 9,539 victims of human rights abuse under the martial law regime imposed by Marcos.

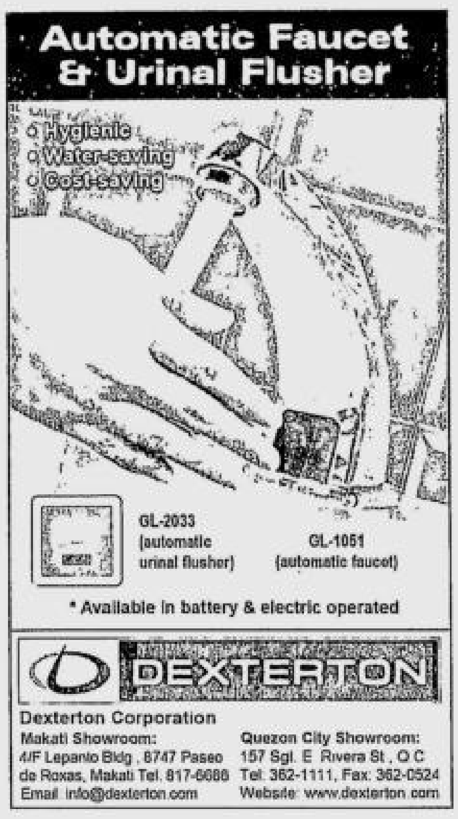
The assets are being held by the New York-based brokerage company Merrill Lynch Inc.

In July 2000, the PCGG asked Merrill Lynch to turn over the Arelma assets to the Philippine government. It proposed that they be placed in escrow with the Philippine National Bank while the antigraft court had yet to rule on whether the assets belonged to the government or to the Marcos estate.

The proposal was rejected by Merrill Lynch, citing the existence of other claimants.

In its urgent motion, the PCGG pointed to the "crucial concern" of the dismissal of its petition before the United States' Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals because it failed to secure a judgment from the Sandiganbayan that the assets belonged to the government.

"The recovery of ill-gotten assets and properties would greatly aid our financially crippled government and hasten our national economic recovery, not to mention the fact that they rightfully belong to the people," the PCGG said.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President Macapagal Arroyo joins former President Fidel Ramos, Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, Rep. Neptali Gonzalez II and Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita to form a fivesome that served as a mini-Ledac (Legislative-Executive Development Advisory Council) in the fairways of the Malacanang Golf Club. The fellowship golf game was held on the eve of the President's departure for Singapore for the recent Asean summit. MALACAÑANG PHOTO

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'MOOT AND ACADEMIC'

Amparo suit dismissed

By Leila B. Salaverria

AN AMPARO PETITION WAS DISmissed as moot and academic by the Court of Appeals yesterday, after the two men whose freedom was being sought told the court that they were not being detained against their will by the Army.

The mothers of Juvy Ortiz and Jeffrey Panganiban had filed a petition for amparo (protection) for the release of their sons who were arrested by the 76th Infantry Battalion in Quezon on suspicion that they were members of the communist New People's Army.

The writ is a court order that requires respondents—whether government officials or agencies, or private individuals—to take action to resolve a grievance and not merely deny the allegation against them.

Following Juvy's and Jeffrey's statements before the court that their liberty was not being restrained, Justice Edgardo Cruz said the issues in the petition were moot and academic and declared the case closed.

The appellate court also directed the 7th IB to release Juvy.

However, Jeffrey told the court that he preferred to remain at the military camp, and the court said he could stay there for as long as he wishes.

Mothers' suit

The men's mothers, Leny Panganiban and Maria Ortiz, earlier asked the Supreme Court to direct Lt. Col. Ramon Tello, the commanding officer of the 76th IB, to release their sons and to order an inspection of the military camp.

Juvy allegedly disclosed to his relatives who visited him at the camp that he and Jeffrey were being hurt by their captors. The mothers also said no charges have been filed against their sons.

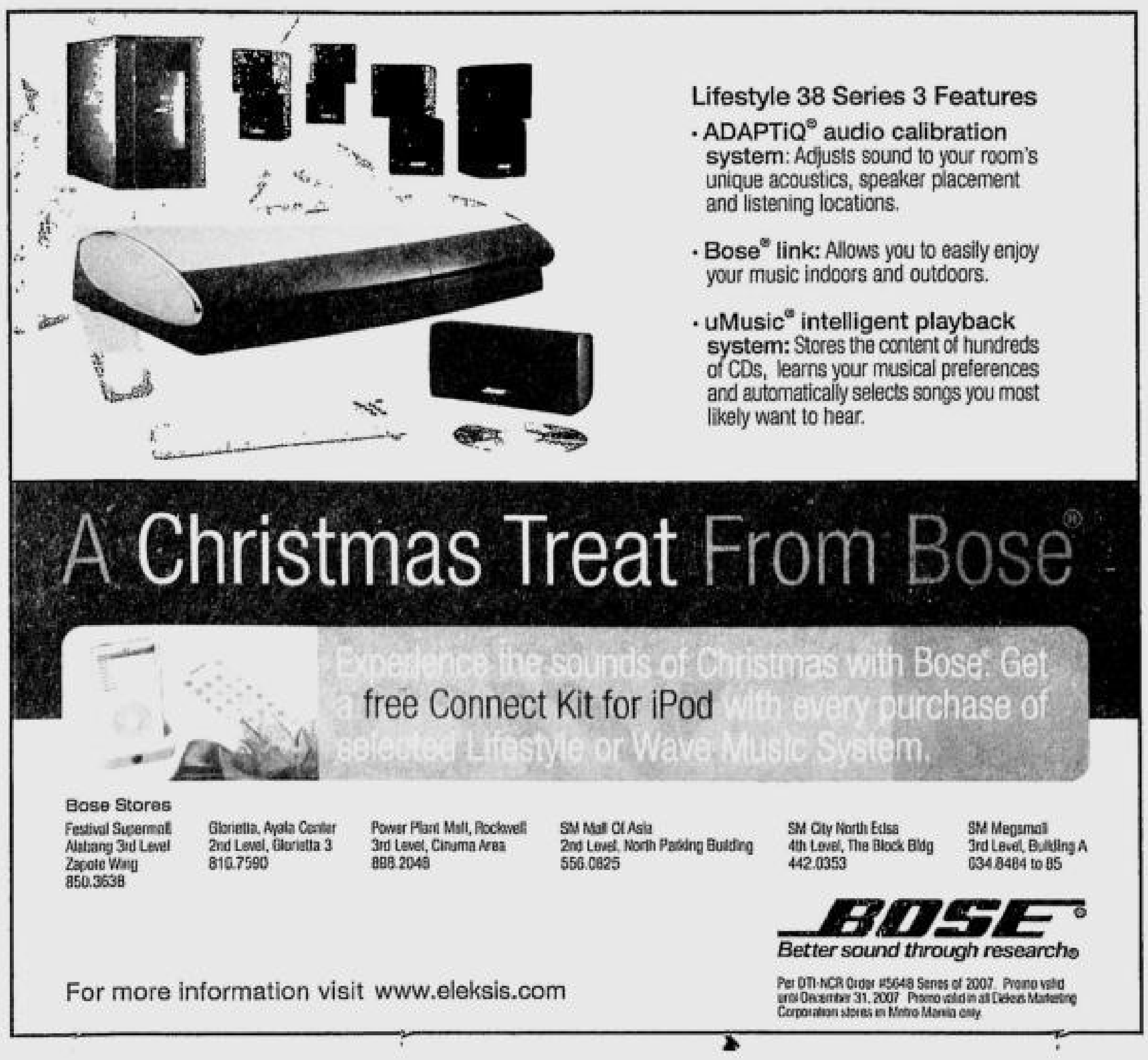
At yesterday's hearing, Tello said Juvy and Jeffrey were not being restrained and had chosen to stay at the camp for their own protection. He said that while at the camp their minds had already been "redirected" concerning their involvement with the NPA.

But the mothers' lawyer Pura Calleja said the two men had told their mothers a different story, which was why the mothers had filed the petition for amparo.

Both Juvy and Jeffrey told the justices that they were not being detained against their will at the 76th IB.

Jeffrey told the court they had not been tortured, forced or intimidated inside the camp. He said they were only "*tinapik-tapik* (tapped lightly)." He also said he would rather stay with the 76th IB for his own security.

Juvy changed his mind several times about whether to remain at the army camp or go home to his mother.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Noli backs Pinay 'sex slaves' in case

By Cynthia D. Balana

VICE PRESIDENT NOLI DE CASTRO YESterday personally accompanied three Overseas Filipino Workers who ended up as sex slaves in Malaysia to file charges of large-scale illegal recruitment and trafficking in persons against their recruiter here.

It was the second time that De Castro, presidential adviser on OFWs, accompanied aggrieved workers to the Department of Justice.

Last week, he also assisted 10 Filipino seamen, who had staged a mutiny in their ship off the coast of Mauritius, to file similar charges against their recruiter here.

He stressed the importance of prosecuting scrupulous recruiters.

"*Gaya nang una ko nang ginawa, hindi ako magsasawang samahan ang ating mga inaping kababayang sampahan ng kaso ang mga nambiktima sa kanila upang matiyak lang ang agarang pagbigay sa kanila ng katarungan* (I will never tire of helping our fellowmen file charges against those who have victimized them to make sure justice is served," De Castro said.

He said he would not stop pursuing those who victimize OFWs and their hard-earned money.

In their complaint, the three women, whose identities were withheld to protect them, alleged that they were recruited by an unnamed Filipina who has connections with a Malaysian immigration officer.

They said the recruiter offered them jobs as waitresses and they were deployed abroad without going through the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) for document processing.

The complainants left the country for Labuan, Malaysia on Nov. 2 this year. Upon their arrival in that country, they were allegedly turned into sex slaves and were not allowed to go out of the building where they were staying.

They also told De Castro earlier that there were still 40 other Filipinas in the same sex den and that more were being recruited.

"They decided to tell their sad plight so that other would-be victims could be properly warned," De Castro said.

He vowed to closely monitor the development of the two cases and the successful prosecution of illegal recruiters.

He also warned would-be OFWs to go through the legal process of recruitment of the Overseas Welfare Workers Administration (OWWA) and the POEA to guard against unscrupulous recruiters.

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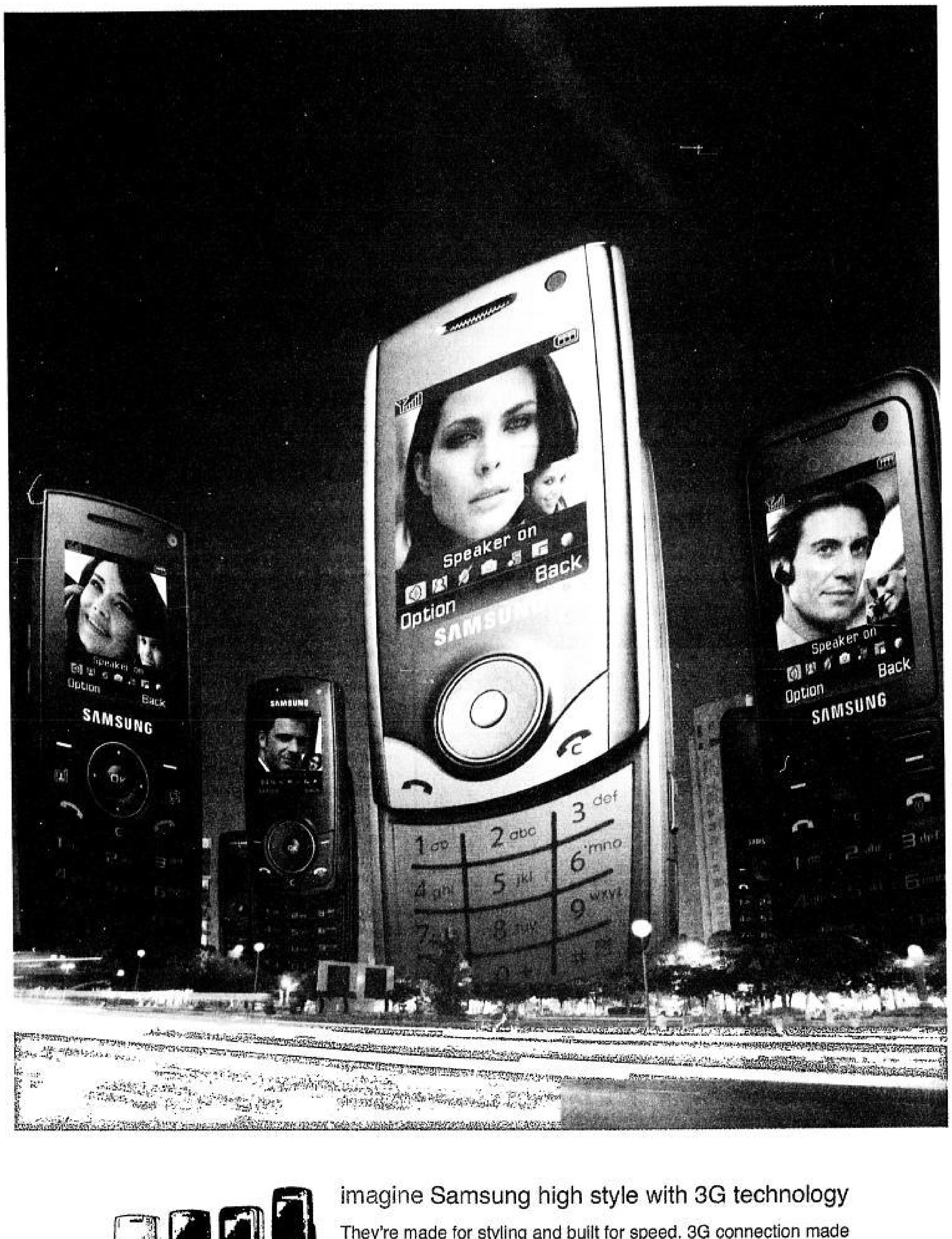

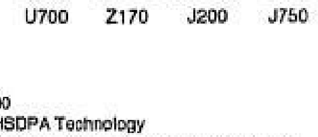

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Court asked to stop Transco bidding

From page A1

lowed to take part in it.

"Our consortium, which is 95 percent Filipino, legally deserves to bid for the backbone of the country's energy sector. But that's not the only reason why we filed this case. We also want to safeguard the integrity of the bidding process by opening it to judicial and public scrutiny," De Ocampo said in a text message to the INQUIRER.

"A deal of this magnitude must be attended by fair play and transparency," he said.

PSALM, a public corporation created by the 2001 Electric Power Industry Act (Epira), is tasked with the management of all state-owned power assets and facilities.

Transco was created under the Epira to own and operate all the transmission and sub-transmission assets of the National Power Corp., including power lines, towers, substations and other facilities.

The Epira law requires full deregulation of the power industry, and requires that the government auction off all power-related assets, including Transco's national transmission grid.

The petition said the PSALM's privatization, bidding and awards committee (PBAC)'s act of disqualifying the consortium was a crime under Sec. 3 of the antigraft law.

Favoring another bidder

It accused the Transco PBAC of having acted in bad faith and of "obviously favoring another prospective bidder" at the expense of the consortium.

The PBAC said it was not satisfied that La Costa Development Corp., the Philippine member of the consortium, had the ability to fund the equity investment required.

Under the bidding procedures, each prospective bidder must submit a pre-qualification proposal where it must prove that it is financially and technically qualified for the project. One of the qualifications is that the Filipino investor in each consortium must prove that it is capable of funding an equity investment of at least $300 million.

But La Costa, which had tapped SNC Lavallin of Canada as its foreign technical partner, claimed that it had fully complied with the bidding procedures and proved its capability to fund an equity investment of at least $300 million using one of the modes allowed by the bidding guidelines.

The mode used was the presentation of an opinion from a qualified bank (the Security Bank) that the national member had the ability to fund the equity investment. The opinion must be dated within 14 days before the pre-qualification deadline.

Ability to fund $300M

The Security Bank opinion stated that it was "highly confident that La Costa Development Corp. Inc. and its major principals have the ability to fund an equity investment equal to $300 million."

According to the petition, the respondents had not raised any further questions or objections after they received the Security Bank opinion on Oct. 4, 2007.

The consortium claimed that the deadline for the announcement of the pre-qualified bidders was extended twice "to accommodate some prospective bidders that had some difficulty submitting duly consularized or authenticated documents, among which was the Monte Oro/State Grid Consortium."

The Monte Oro consortium, a partnership between Monte Oro Grid Resources Corp. and the State Grid Corp. of China, is identified with the group of businessman Enrique Razon who also controls port operator International Container Terminal Services Inc.

La Costa said it submitted all the required documents within the stated deadline.

Another interested bidder—a consortium of Citadel Holdings Inc. and Power Grid Corp. of India—was also initially disqualified for failing to submit their 2006 audited financial statements. Citadel filed a petition for reconsideration and was eventually included in the shortlist of qualified bidders.

Arbitrary disqualification

La Costa also filed a petition for reconsideration but was rejected.

"The extensions of the deadline for the filing of the pre-qualification requirements to allow certain bidders to complete their requirements and the disqualification of two bidders, including the La Costa Consortium, on flimsy grounds are indicative of some bias or partiality.

"Considering the foregoing circumstances, it clearly appears that the completely arbitrary disqualification of the La Costa Consortium and the Citadel/Power Grid Consortium was part of a conscious and deliberate effort to eliminate at least some of the competing bidders for the Transco privatization," the petition said.

4 other consortia

Including Citadel, there are four consortia that have been prequalified for the Dec. 12 bidding. The others are: the consortium of San Miguel Energy Corp. and TPG Aurora BV represented by San Miguel Corp. president Ramon Ang, the consortium of Two Rivers Pacific Holdings Corp. and Terna-Rete Electtrica Nazionale SPA represented by Metro Pacific Corp. president Jose Ma. Lim and the consortium of Monte Oro Grid Resources Corp. and State Grid Corp. of China represented by Walter Brown.

"By deviating from the declared and concrete criteria for financial pre-qualification, defendants acted in excess of discretion or with grave abuse of discretion. Defendants violated not only their own procedures or rules; they violated the law," La Costa said.

The complaint said Ibazeta did not even bother to discuss any of the arguments raised in La Costa's petition for reconsideration.

The decision to disqualify was not based on any reasonable justification, the petition said.

"Rather, it was apparently based solely on the undisclosed perceptions and impressions of defendants, which are not among the criteria provided for under the Epira, its implementing rules, or the bidding procedures," it said.

Filipino preferred

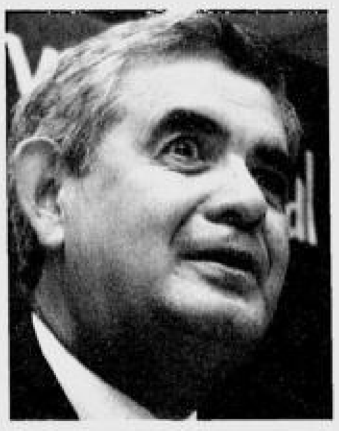
Quoting the constitutional mandate, the petitioners said that in the grant of rights, privileges and concessions covering the national economy and patrimony, the state shall give preference to qualified Filipinos.

In this case, La Costa said it had the largest Filipino equity of 95 percent compared to the 60 percent of the other bidders.

"The scheme to favor certain bidders with substantial foreign equities puts a vital public utility and the country's power industry at the mercy of foreign capitalists. This is the very evil sought to be avoided by the fundamental law. Obviously, defendants failed to heed this fundamental mandate," La Costa said.

Zamora, a brother of San Juan Rep. Ronaldo Zamora, is the president of Hinatuan Mining Corp. which operates a nickel mine in Manicani island off the coast of Guiuan in Eastern Samar.

De Ocampo, a former president of the Asian Institute of Management, is an independent director of Bankard Inc., EEI Corp., and the House of Investments Inc.



IBAZETA: Complaint claims he did not listen to arguments

DE OCAMPO: Safeguard integrity of bidding process

Solons to Teves: Explain 'hasty' PNOC-EDC sale

From page A1

suspend the further proceedings on the sale to prevent more serious measures that JCPC might take to withdraw approval of the sale and to uphold the law," said JCPC cochairs Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago and Rep. Juan Miguel Arroyo in a letter sent to Teves yesterday.

In its resolution, the JCPC wants Teves "to personally explain why, despite the law that mandates PNOC-EDC to explore and develop indigenous sources of energy, and without the basic courtesy of notice to the JCPC, the Privatization Council nonetheless approved the sale to the highest bidder."

The JCPC also wants Teves to explain his "surprising action." The committee noted that the JCPC had already agreed as early as May last year for an alternative disposition program wherein each of PNOC-EDC's geothermal plant would be packaged with a long-term steam sales agreement subject to its approval.

The committee noted that the Epira (Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001), preferred that the sale of power generation assets be made through outright sale of power generation assets and not through the sale of equity shares in the holding firm, PNOC-EDC.

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
National Capital Region
DY Int'l Bldg., 1650 San Marcelino cor. General Malvar St., Malate, Manila

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office application/s for Alien Employment Permit/s:

Name and address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National/ Citizenship	Position
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SPORTS BOOKIE ONLINE, INC. 24/F Burgundy Corporate Tower, 252 Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City	Heng Hong Yan Malaysian	Chinese/Mandarin-language Customer Support Staff
SPORTS BOOKIE ONLINE, INC. 24/F Burgundy Corporate Tower, 252 Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City	Yin Shek Yap Malaysian	Hookien-language Customer Support Staff
SPORTS BOOKIE ONLINE, INC. 24/F Burgundy Corporate Tower, 252 Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City	Chin Wah Hew Malaysian	Chinese/Mandarin-language Customer Support Staff
SPORTS BOOKIE ONLINE, INC. 24/F Burgundy Corporate Tower, 252 Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City	Hoong Sin Ng Malaysian	Chinese/Mandarin-language Customer Support Staff
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SPORTS BOOKIE ONLINE, INC. 24/F Burgundy Corporate Tower, 252 Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City	Yong Fong Tee Malaysian	Chinese/Mandarin-language Customer Support Staff
GAMINGWEB, INC. 17/F Yuchengco Tower, RCBC Plaza, 6819 Ayala Ave., Makati City	Chiew Teck Tan Malaysian	Sports-book Operations Officer
GAMINGWEB, INC. 17/F Yuchengco Tower, RCBC Plaza, 6819 Ayala Ave., Makati City	Wai Teck Ng Malaysian	Sports-book Operations Officer
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GAMINGWEB, INC. 17/F Yuchengco Tower, RCBC Plaza, 6819 Ayala Ave., Makati City	Wei Beng Yeow Malaysian	Sports-book Operations Officer
GAMINGWEB, INC. 17/F Yuchengco Tower, RCBC Plaza, 6819 Ayala Ave., Makati City	Lai Tee Wong Malaysian	Sports-book Operations Officer
GAMINGWEB, INC. 17/F Yuchengco Tower, RCBC Plaza, 6819 Ayala Ave., Makati City	Poh Aun Cheng Malaysian	Sports-book Operations Officer
GAMINGWEB, INC. 17/F Yuchengco Tower, RCBC Plaza, 6819 Ayala Ave., Makati City	Eng Kian Law Malaysian	Sports-book Operations Officer
CLC LUCKY INT'L INC. U314 3F Gateway Centre, Paseo de Magallanes Comm. Ctr., Makati City	Sanghak Yu Korean	Supervisor
CLC LUCKY INT'L INC. U314 3F Gateway Centre, Paseo de Magallanes Comm. Ctr., Makati City	Jinrong Huang Chinese	Purchasing Manager II
Y & J POWER EDUCATION CORP. 12/F Tycoon Ctr., Condo Pearl Drive, Ortigas, Pasig City	Heejae Yang Korean	President/Chairman of the Board
PARAN TRAVEL & TOURS CORP. 5F Pan Pacific Hotel Gen. Malvar St. cor. Adriatico St., Manila	Jonge Park Korean	Asst. General Manager
FUJI XEROX PHILIPPINES, INC. 19/F 6788 Ayala Avenue, Makati City	Michael Patrick Kelly Irish	WSC Site Delivery Manager
STARSHINE TOURS & TRAVEL CORP. 138 Timog Avenue cor. EDSA Bgy. Sacred Heart, Quezon City	Youngsook Kim (w/o Lee) Korean	Marketing Officer
ENGLISH 11 INC. 1706 Antel Global Corporation, Dona Julia Vargas Ave., Ortigas, Pasig City	Donghyun Lee Korean	Asst. General Manager
CONNECT88 INC. 28/F Yuchengco Tower 1, RCBC Plaza, 6819 Ayala Avenue, Makati City	Tao Sha Chinese	Technical Staff
SEOJUNEKOREA, INC. Rm. 402 Executive Center, Adriatico St., Malate, Manila	Namsuk Park (wife of Lim) Korean	Office Staff
XP MEDIA ASIA PACIFIC LIMITED CORPORATION 2402D PSE Bldg., Exchange Road, Ortigas Center, Pasig City	Misook Lee Korean	Administration Manager
XP MEDIA ASIA PACIFIC LIMITED CORPORATION 2402D PSE Bldg., Exchange Road, Ortigas Center, Pasig City	Byong Hee Park Korean	Supervisor
PROV INTERNATIONAL (PHILIPPINES), INC. 37/F GT Tower International Ayala Ave., cor. H.V. Dela Costa St., Makati City	Ezhilvel Elangovan Indian	Software Engineer
DELBROS, INC. Delbros Bldg., A.C. Delgado St. cor. 17th & 18th Sts. Port Area, Manila	Joseph Ciorun American	Sales and Marketing Manager
GAMINGWEB, INC. 17/F Yuchengco Tower, RCBC Plaza, 6819 Ayala Ave., Makati City	Eu Eng Yiap Malaysian	Sports-book Operations Officer

If you have any information/objection to the above mentioned application/s please communicate with the Regional Director.

RAYMUNDO G. AGRAVANTE
OIC, Regional Director

(PDI - Nov. 24, 2007)

Church leaders . . .

From page A1

claimed were massive diversion of public funds under the present administration.

The Religious of the Good Shepherd, another signatory, called for Ms Arroyo's resignation in a separate statement following its provincial assembly.

Suspicious events

The Good Shepherd Sisters said the recent bomb explosion at the Batasan premises—in which Congressman Wahab Akbar and three other people were killed—added to the long list of suspicious events that had happened under the present administration.

"Who will deny the national government has lost the moral ascendancy to govern this country? We don't! Therefore we strongly ask the Chief Executive Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to step down," the RGS said.

Nov. 30 rally

Solidarity Philippines has also issued a call for a multi-sectoral rally at the Liwasang Bonifacio on Nov. 30.

The statement was issued in the name of more than 20 people, including Archbishops Angel Lagdameo and Oscar Cruz, other church personalities and political figures, among them former Vice President Teofisto Guingona and allies of ousted former President Joseph Estrada.

Lagdameo was identified as a signatory in his capacity as archbishop of Jaro and not as president of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines.

The SP statement criticized the Arroyo presidency for continuing "to reap pain and ruin for [the] nation and people."

It said those "pains" included the extrajudicial killings in the country, the scrapped National Broadband Network deal with China's ZTE Corp., the fertilizer funds scam, and the cash handouts given to congressmen and local officials in Malacañang last month, among others.

Degradation of values

"We cannot have a nation without a soul, governance without morality. We must unite! We must struggle for Truth! For Justice! For Meaningful and Fundamental Change!" it said.

"We reject a morally bankrupt government," it also said.

Others mentioned as signatories were Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay, Teresita Quintos Deles of the Black and White Movement, Betina Legarda of the Concerned Citizens Group, Ver Eustaquio of the United Movement for Democracy and Justice, and Carol Araullo of Bayan.

The group berated the government for its supposed degradation of values, saying the country's collective integrity was "blighted by the wanton examples of bribery, graft and corruption."

Nov. 30 rallies

Participants at the SP rally are expected to link up with members of the Kilusang Makabansang Ekonomiya (KME) who are also holding a rally on that day to coincide with Bonifacio Day.

The KME, along with other Christian groups such as the Jesus Is Lord Movement, last month also called for Ms Arroyo's resignation.

Fr. Jose Dizon, SP convenor, said the rally is expected to be a venue for other anti-Arroyo forces to link up.

Dizon said in an interview that some 500 religious and civil society leaders had committed their support to the SP and that more groups were expected to join its call.

Although Lagdameo signed the SP statement, the call for the rejection of the Arroyo administration does not represent the stand of the CBCP, Dizon said.

Unanswered questions

"We are pained by the extrajudicial killings; by the forced disappearances which have heightened despite the fact that this pattern of abuse was brought to the attention of the President early on, long before the outcry of concerned international officials and organizations condemned them before the world," the SP statement said.

SP also said: "We are pained when billions of pesos are shamelessly diverted to serve personal political interests—such as the abrasive diversion in the fertilizer scam of public funds meant for farmers to ensure victory in the tainted presidential elections of 2004."

It also said: "Parents cannot adequately answer the questions of their own children—about the ZTE, how much bribes are involved, why? They cannot answer how come congressmen and governors receive so much money. Who are guilty? Why do they go unpunished? What kind of justice do we have?"

Owners drop plans for hospital holiday after DOH concessions

PRIVATE HOSPITAL OWNERS HAVE dropped plans to hold "hospital holidays" following the Department of Health decision to provide additional assistance to hospitals to help them cope with the impending implementation of the Hospital Detention Law.

Health Secretary Francisco Duque III said at the sidelines of the Private Hospitals Association of the Philippines (PHAP) national convention and exhibition that the government has agreed to grant some of the group's request.

The DOH, for example, has included in the Implementing Rules and Regulation of Republic Act No. 9439 or the Hospital Detention Law, provisions that will reduce prison terms of violators to 6 months from the 20 years provided for by the Revised Penal Code.

PCSO assistance

The DOH has also increased the hospital or medical assistance of the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) to indigent patients to P100,000 from P20,000.

Duque said the PCSO will also provide private hospitals, particularly those in the provinces, with up to 250 ambulances.

PHAP spokesperson Dr. Rustico Jimenez said only one PHAP request—the mass accreditation with Philippine Health Insurance Corp. (PhilHealth)—was not granted by the DOH pending further study.

The PHAP had asked the DOH to reinstate its accreditation as one of PhilHealth's nationally accredited health care organizations so that member-hospitals will no longer need to get a separate PhilHealth accreditation.

Non-paying patients

The PHAP member-hospitals had planned to stage a hospital holiday in September to protest the enactment of the Hospital Detention Law which prohibits hospitals from detaining non-paying patients.

The group was planning to hold the "holiday" for two days each month until 2008 or when the government repeals the law.

The PHAP held off the action as they continued talks with the DOH to help private hospital owners cope with financial losses and other problems with the new law.

Ex-governor cleared of graft

THE SANDIGANBAYAN HAS CLEARED FORmer Misamis Oriental Gov. Antonio Calingin of illegal use of public funds in connection with a multimillion road project he initiated six years ago.

In the absence of sufficient evidence against them, the antigraft court's Third Division also acquitted three other former provincial officials—budget officer Claudeta Baliton, treasurer Elias Saucillo and accountant Catalino Salahid.

The former officials were accused of misapplying P3.5 million in provincial trust fund which was used as partial payment for the Manibay-Malagana-Pelaez road project supposedly funded by then Sen. Robert Jaworski.

The prosecution said the amount was appropriated to the road project in the absence of an ordinance or a law.

"[It], however, failed to prove that the provincial trust was appropriated by law for a particular purpose ... that Calingin and others used this fund for a purpose other than for which it was created," the court ruled in a 20-page decision.

The court also noted that no evidence, testimonial or documentary was presented to prove such "specific purpose" for which the trust fund was established and that the amount was used for a different purpose.

"Disbursement of public funds for public use is per se not an unlawful act. Thus, the burden of proving by competent evidence that Calingin's act of advancing from the provincial trust fund P3.5 million to pay a legitimate government contractor was illegal rests upon the prosecution," the court further stated. *Jocelyn R. Uy*

Kidnap cases down, says PNP

THE PHILIPPINE National Police (PNP) yesterday said incidents of kidnapping were cut in half this year compared to last year.

In a statement yesterday, PNP Chief Avelino Razon said 19 kidnapping incidents were recorded from January to October this year while a total of 44 incidents were recorded in 2006 for a 56.8 percent decrease.

Razon also revealed that a total of 31 kidnappers have been arrested this year, 11 of whom are included in the PNP's Most Wanted list of kidnappers. Another 16 suspected kidnappers were killed in police operations while three more surrendered to police.

Razon attributed the drop to the "downloading" or transfer of 90 percent of police personnel from desk jobs to beat and mobile patrols. The downloading has "significantly improved police visibility and deterred possible commission of crimes including kidnapping, carjacking and robbery."

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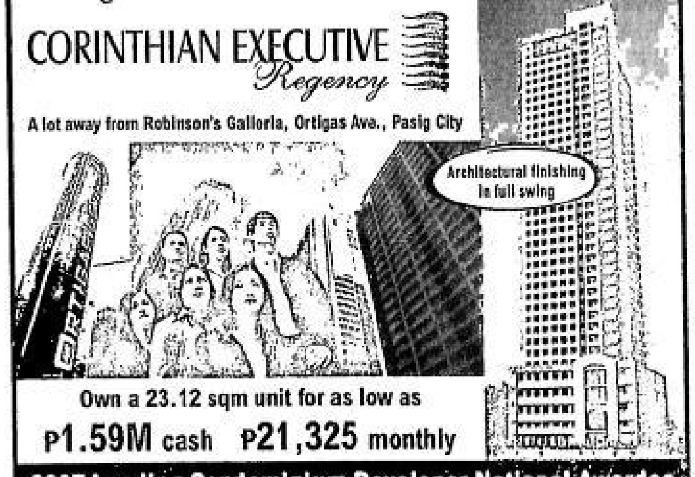

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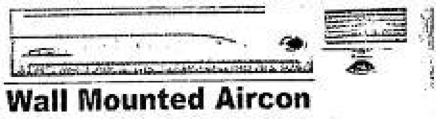

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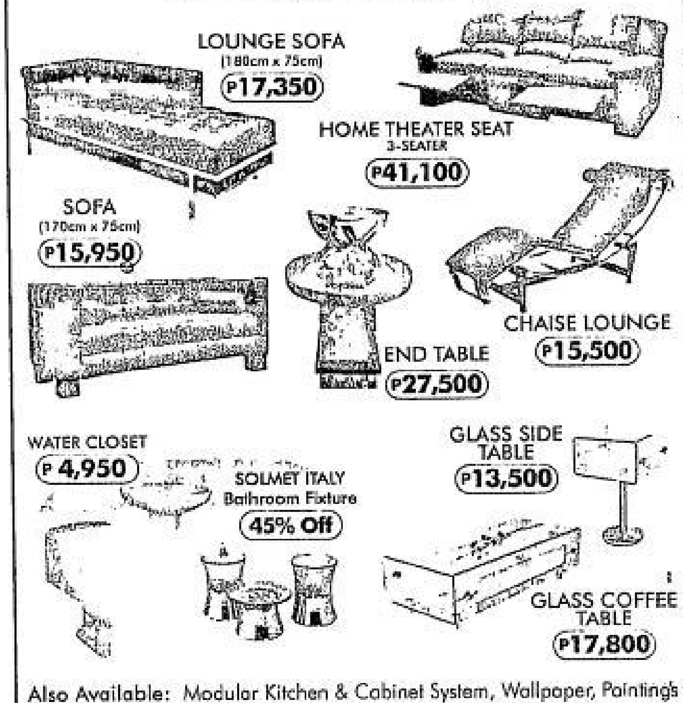

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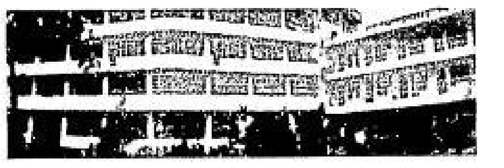

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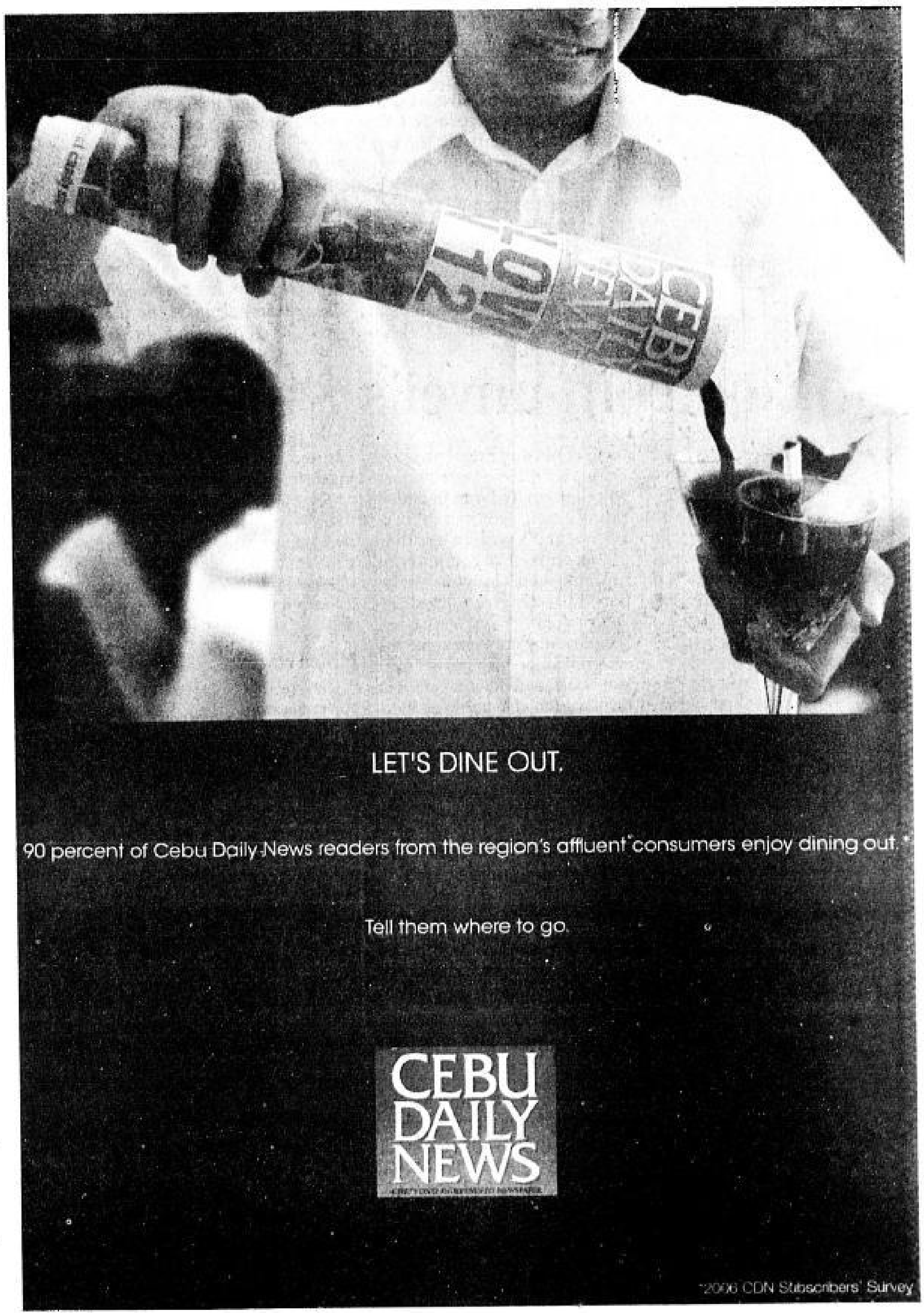

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Absurd, says Noynoy on claim Danding was mastermind

From page A1

kumuha ng order? *Kaninong* order *ba siya?'* (I told them, I asked them, 'Where did you get your order? Whose order was it?)" Martinez said in the interview.

He said the men replied: *"Si* Danding." He added that he did not hear Cojuangco issue the order, and that the men's statement was the only link to the tycoon that he knew about.

Cojuangco is in Australia and could not be reached for comment. His son, Pangasinan Rep. Mark Cojuangco, said Martinez's claim was "completely false." *(See Box.)*

Estelito Mendoza, one of Cojuangco's lawyers, said he had no knowledge of the matter and no authority to talk about it.

COJUANGCO: Infighting in the Marcos clique, was he a scapegoat?

AQUINO: My uncle and father had a good relationship.

Good relationship

"The claim of Martinez is an absurdity. It is just as absurd as the claim that [the late dictator] Ferdinand Marcos chose my father to be his successor," Noynoy Aquino said.

He said the accusation against Cojuangco was being interspersed with bits of truth to sound convincing, but he did not believe it.

"Why would my uncle want to have my father killed [when] he was not at the pinnacle of power then?" he said, adding:

"My father and my uncle had a good relationship. My family split ways with my uncle in 1965 only because he sided with Marcos. But that was the extent of it.

"If one was a criminal, would one lay down a trail that would lead to himself?

"It was absurd then, and it is absurd now. If Martinez still claims [Rolando] Galman was the gunman, why should we believe him?"

Martinez and 15 other soldiers were meted out life terms in 1990 for the double murder of Ninoy Aquino and Galman, an alleged communist hit man sent to kill the former senator and Marcos archenemy who was returning from exile in the United States.

Two of the 16 have since died of natural causes.

For years, former President Aquino and her grown children have rejected the jailed soldiers' claim that it was Galman who shot Ninoy Aquino, and that Cojuangco masterminded the assassination.

Martinez, a former master sergeant, was granted a conditional pardon by President Macapagal-Arroyo on grounds of his advanced age and good behavior. He was released from prison on Thursday.

On that same day, Senator Aquino said the pardon might have been Malacañang's way of getting back at his family for its critical stance against the Arroyo administration.

Yesterday, Senator Aquino said that the people behind his father's assassination were fine-tuning their story every year to implicate others.

He said it also appeared that someone was taking care of the families of those convicted of his father's murder.

Convenient scapegoat

He added that Cojuangco was "a convenient scapegoat, perhaps because there was infighting within the Marcos clique then."

The senator said Ms Arroyo's grant of executive clemency to Martinez was adding further insult to injury to his family.

He said that if one was to believe the claim that Ms Arroyo may not have been aware of whom she was pardoning, "it was a failure on the part of her legal advisers."

There appears to be no legal remedy to reverse the pardon, unless Ms Arroyo herself does it, the senator said.

"My family is not the sole victim of such an action. The entire Philippines is a victim of wrong governance," he said.

But Presidential Legal Counsel Sergio Apostol protested the idea that pardoning Martinez was a form of injustice:

"Injustice? [The 16 ex-soldiers] have been imprisoned for 24 years. In six years, the others can be freed. And then Martinez is also sickly. He has hypertension, diabetes. Let's not talk of injustice. It's the privilege of the President to grant [pardon]. No politics here [but] humanitarian reasons."

Apostol also took offense at Senator Aquino's statement the other day—that it was ironic that Malacañang pardoned Martinez just as his family was preparing to mark his father's birthday on Nov. 27.

"Bakit siya pepersonalin? Si Noynoy, di nga siya marunong magasawa, pepersonalin pa (Why would we single him out? Noynoy doesn't even know how to marry, and we'd single him out)?" Apostol said before breaking out in laughter.

"I don't know if it's coincidence or not, but I think the President is not aware [of that]," he added.

In another interview with the INQUIRER, Senator Aquino said Martinez's claim about Cojuangco did not necessarily become believable now that the prisoner had become a free man.

Preposterous

The senator said Martinez first aired the accusation in a media interview in 2003, where, he said, the man made preposterous claims, including the statement that Cojuangco and other Marcos cronies at the time felt threatened because of the dictator's supposed plan to name Ninoy Aquino as his successor.

"[Cojuangco] and my dad were really close before 1965. Even afterwards, they were not radical enemies," the senator recalled.

"From the start, we have said we are for reconciliation. But it should have justice," he said.

The senator also said he caught a TV interview of Martinez after his pardon, and noted the ex-soldier's pause when he asked former President Aquino's forgiveness for his sin.

"Parang iniisip pa niya kung ano ang kasalanan niya (It was like he was wondering what his sin was)," the senator said.

Prescription

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez said it was up to the court to determine if Martinez's tagging of Cojuangco could be considered "newly discovered evidence" to warrant the reopening of the case.

But Gonzalez said it was suspicious that Martinez was only speaking about it now, and pointed out that the statement appeared to be an "afterthought."

He added that the case had prescribed, or had gone beyond the period that allowed legal action.

Gonzalez also said the Aquino-Galman convicts had suffered enough, and that the Aquinos should not take offense at Martinez's liberty.

"I don't think they should be offended. After all, these [convicts] suffered in jail for 25 years. They lost the best years of their lives," he said. *With reports from Dona Z. Pazzibugan, Leila B. Salaverria and Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson*

Danding son says Martinez claim a lie

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE SON OF BUSINESSMAN EDUARDO "Danding" Cojuangco yesterday denied the claim of newly pardoned convict Pablo Martinez that his father was behind the assassination of Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr.

"I condemn the implications, the accusations being made, as completely false. I want to state categorically that they are not true," Pangasinan Rep. Mark Cojuangco said in a phone interview.

Cojuangco said his father was in Australia, and that he had not spoken to the latter yet.

Meeting with Mitra

He said he personally knew that his father did not even know that Aquino was coming home from the United States on that fateful day on Aug. 21, 1983, which he said he remembered clearly because it "sent chills up and down my spine."

The lawmaker recalled that his father was then meeting with Ramon Mitra (since deceased) and talking about cattle, and Mitra subsequently excused himself, saying he was going to meet Aquino at the airport.

"That's the only time Dad knew Ninoy was arriving... I myself was a witness that Dad did not know about his arrival," the lawmaker said.

He said he could not imagine Martinez's motive for claiming that his father was behind the Aquino assassination, but added that he wanted the public and the media to know that the claim was false.

Cojuangco also said the accusation was affecting his family, including his children.

"I'm sick and tired of this... It's an out and out fabrication," he said.

Puno: Pardon of ex-soldier in Aquino slay a political act

ASKED TO COMMENT ON THE PARDON given to ex-soldier Pablo Martinez, Chief Justice Reynato Puno said in an interview last night: "Let me say that the power to pardon is exclusively given to the President.

"This power, to be exercised, has two purposes. It can be exercised by the President to correct an injustice in the justice system, and it can be exercised for humanitarian reasons.

"But whatever the purpose, [it] is a political act of the President. She's answerable only to her conscience and to the people. It is a political judgment."

Earlier in the day, the Palace denied that the pardon had political undertones.

"Why would Malacañang get back [at the Aquino family]? When did the President take revenge? She doesn't take revenge. No politics [in this case]," Presidential Legal Counsel Sergio Apostol told reporters yesterday.

He said Ms Arroyo "didn't even know perhaps when she signed [the pardon document] that this fellow is involved in the killing."

Asked if no one had told Ms Arroyo that Martinez was among the 16 ex-soldiers imprisoned for the Aquino assassination, Apostol said: *"Hindi naman. Wala namang nagsabi nun* (No, nobody told her about it)."

Through the mill

He also said it was not in Ms Arroyo's nature to be vindictive: "There's no revenge. [The pardon is] mainly following [her] administrative order, and secondly, because [she] is a very merciful woman. [It's] for humanitarian reasons, aside from the fact that [Martinez] is 70 years old. He's also sickly."

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita stressed that the pardon was extended to Martinez because he was qualified for it and because he had reached the age of 70.

"It just goes through the mill ... It goes through the normal course, together with the others considered for commutation of sentence and executive clemency," he said in a phone interview.

Asked whether Ms Arroyo knew who Martinez was, Ermita said: "I suppose so."

He said it was his office that prepared the communications and sent the papers to Ms Arroyo.

Ermita also said that "as far as I know, [the pardon] has nothing to do with former President Aquino."

The conditional pardon dated Nov. 7 was signed by Ermita. The order was received by the Bureau of Corrections only on Wednesday.

The transmittal page addressed to the executive secretary, acting secretary of justice and director of corrections bore Ms Arroyo's signature, dry seal and hologram (No. 42432).

It said: "Pursuant to the authority conferred upon me by the Constitution, I hereby grant executive clemency to prisoner Pablo Martinez y Salomon, subject to the conditions indicated in the corresponding documents. Given under my hand at the City of Manila, this 7th day of November in the year of Our Lord, two thousand and seven." *Reports from DJ Yap, Michael Lim Ubac and Christine O. Avendaño*

Amazon.com unveils $400 e-book reader

From page A1

"electronic paper," the company said.

The hand-held device called Kindle is about the same size as a paperback but "lighter and thinner" and can store up to 200 items that can be downloaded by a built-in wireless Internet connection.

"We've been working on Kindle for more than three years. Our top design objective was for Kindle to disappear in your hands—to get out of the way—so you can enjoy your reading," said Jeff Bezos, Amazon.com founder and chief executive.

Seattle-based Amazon began as an online bookseller but has since grown into the world's largest Web retailer and second-most-popular e-commerce site behind eBay Inc., selling everything from scooters to diamonds to groceries.

In 60 seconds

In a note to customers on the company's website, www.amazon.com, Bezos wrote: "The book lover in me often has asked the nerd in me: 'Is there a way to get the emotions and experiences I love from books, but combined with the possibilities of advanced technology?'"

He added: "We also wanted to go beyond the physical book. Kindle is wireless, so whether you're lying in bed or riding a train, you can think of a book, and have it in less than 60 seconds. No computer is needed—you do your shopping directly from the device."

According to Amazon, the screen works "using ink," just like books and newspapers, but displays the ink particles electronically.

"Because it reflects light like ordinary paper and uses no backlight, it eliminates the eye strain and glare associated with other electronic displays such as computer monitors," the company said.

90,000 books

According to Amazon, it will make some 90,000 books available in its Kindle Store, including over 100 best-sellers for about $10. Kindle customers can download and read the first chapter of most Kindle books for free.

The device, weighing about 300 grams, uses a high-speed data network called EVDO used on many cell phones, so customers will not need a computer or Wi-Fi connection.

Amazon will not charge a subscription fee or for connection time, but customers will pay for books or other content delivered to the device.

The company said the device "uses a high-resolution display technology called electronic paper that provides a sharp black-and-white screen that is as easy to read as printed paper."

Mixed reviews

The device received mixed reviews from the high-tech community.

"The Kindle isn't the most elegant looking gadget ever created (in fact, it looks like it came out of the '70s), but it packs an impressive list of features and could finally bring e-books mainstream," said Michael Arrington in a blog posted on the website TechCrunch. "That's something Sony couldn't accomplish with its much more elegant Sony Reader."

Arrington said Sony failed because its device required synching with a computer to download content, while Kindle will offer connections for free.

"Bottom line, Amazon has a real chance to take eBooks where they haven't gone before," adds Michael Gartenberg at Jupiter Research. "First devices will likely appeal mostly to road warriors who like to read and hate to carry paper. As prices come down, we'll see more mass market adoption."

Nifty gadget

But Peter Kafka at Silicon Valley Insider said: "No matter how nifty a gadget Bezos' company has created, it won't have the same impact on publishing that Apple's iPod had on the music business."

Kafka said most books are "stubbornly locked" in paper format so consumers would have to pay extra for digital copies even if they own a hard copy of the book.

The device's screen is not back-lit and uses electronic ink to mimic paper. The competing Sony Reader from Sony Corp. uses similar technology but does not include wireless access.

In a research note, Stifel Nicolaus analyst Scott Devitt said the device "has the capacity to recreate the e-book business, as well as several other long-term options."

"With time, we believe Amazon Kindle could be Amazon.com's Trojan Horse into a complete 'always on' connection to all Amazon offerings," Devitt wrote.

Newspaper subscriptions

The company already allows consumers to download videos through its Amazon Unbox service, as well as music through its recently launched Amazon MP3 store—measures designed to ensure consumer loyalty and get a foothold into the nascent digital arena.

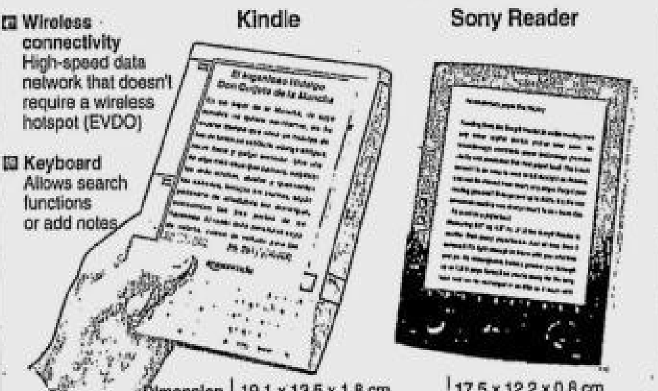
The Kindle service will also offer subscriptions to newspapers, magazines and blogs for a monthly fee.

Subscriptions to newspapers such as the New York Times or the Wall Street Journal will range from $5.99 to $14.99. Magazine subscriptions will range from $1.25 to $3.49 per month.

Amazon will offer subscriptions to blogs at a cost of about 99 cents. *AFP and Reuters*

ELECTRONIC BOOK READERS

Internet retailer Amazon.com announced the launch of Kindle, an e-book reader that will compete with a similar device from Sony, but with an onboard keyboard and wireless connectivity that allows downloads without the need of a computer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	Kindle	Sony Reader
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Weight	292 g	255 g
Display	15.2 cm (diagonal), E-Ink® technology, 600 x 800 pixels, 167 ppi, 4-level grayscale	15.2 cm (diagonal), E-Ink® technology. 170 ppi, 8-level grayscale
Capacity	200 books *(expandable with SD card up to 4 Gb)*	20Mb or 160 books *(expandable with SD card or Memory Stick)*
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INQUIRER

Dare to ask. Be an Inquirer.

Quirky, original, catchy ideas at Ad Congress

From page A1

concludes today at the Subic Convention and Exhibition Center, yesterday provided a wealth of knowledge and a venue for more innovations in advertising and marketing.

A blimp in the convention hall? A TV network thought of giving away prizes using a big white blimp that navigated the hall with an excited crowd in hot pursuit.

A rolling bubble ad? It could be a mere take on the 2001 Hollywood movie "Bubble Boy," but it surely caught everyone's attention.

"Dancing heads" featured at the trade exhibit area literally turned heads: A person's head shot was taken, and then incorporated into a funny dancing video.

Digital power

The sessions, on the other hand, were mostly discussions on the power of the digital age, with top-caliber speakers from all over the world.

Yesterday's topics bonded the power of creativity and the new media platform that is hard to ignore—digital.

The day started with an insightful speech by Michelle Kristula-Green, president of Leo Burnett and Arc, Asia Pacific, on the new buzz on "Wildfire Brands: Ideas that Spread and Sell."

Leo Burnett and Contagious presented this idea at this year's Cannes International Advertising Festival.

This approach means that Wildfire Brands are driven by technology and the value of human connection. Simply put, integration.

Indeed, most of the discussions during the day tackled the integration of the traditional media and the digital platform.

Green encouraged consumers to open their minds to the digital age, saying other media could actually partner with it and reach a wider audience.

"We've got to be curious about technology," she said.

Wayne Fletcher, president of Sandbox, Universal McCAnn, gave the congress delegates a peek on "New and Integrated Media: Award-winning Campaigns."

Tay Guan Hin, the regional executive creative director of Southeast Asia, JWT Singapore, talked about "Engaging Asian Consumers through the Power of Visuals."

Still coming of age

In the afternoon, top executives of worldwide companies like Google, Tribal DDB, Asia Pacific, as well as our own Havoc Digital Philippines and popular online gaming Level Up! explored the emerging power of the digital platform.

Derek Callow, regional marketing manager of Google in Southeast Asia, presented his insights on "The Future of Internet."

In his presentation, Callow stressed that despite a growing number of online users, "the Internet is still coming of age."

It is the fastest growing communications technology, and "it is also important to understand what hasn't changed," he said.

Amanda King, president of Tribal DDB, Asia Pacific, showed the agency's award-winning campaigns in her talk, "Global Internet and Mobile Trends."

Havoc Digital Philippines' managing director, Michael Palacios, discussed "Marketing to an Online Community," and Danilo Mojica, head of Smart Wireless Division and president of Wolfpac, explored the increasing interest in "Mobile Advertising."

Technology as enabler

On Thursday night, two influential women—INQUIRER president and CEO Sandy Prieto-Romualdez and Lisa Gokongwei-Cheng, president of Summit Media—served as reactors on the effect of digital on the print industry.

Romualdez said she saw technology more as an enabler than competition, as evidenced by the success of Inquirer.net.

"Technology enables us to expand our reach and capture other markets," she said.

In the same vein, Cheng said she believed that the two media—prim
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Renowned photographer Mandy Navasero (left) sizes up on a cluster of creative snapshots as one of Panasonic's judges for the recently concluded "The Art of Life" by Panasonic" photo contest. Also shown are Rene Almeda (center), Panasonic Philippines President, and distinguished travel photographer George Tapan who are also part of the Board of Judges.

Characterizing art with Panasonic's innovative virtuosity

Delivering modern and innovative services to the society for more than 40 years, Panasonic once again stepped forward for a classic and meaningful photography competition as it recently awarded the lucky winners of "The Art of Life by Panasonic" photo contest that hoarded hundreds of entries nationwide, at the Trinoma Activity Center.

Recognizing the significance of impelling artistic photography in the Philippines, Panasonic brought together amateur and professional photographers from different regions in the country to showcase their talent in capturing beautiful photos that depict the magnificence of life. Dubbed as the "Art of Life by Panasonic", the contest takes on the challenge of depicting and characterizing life's many facets through artistic, imaginative, conceptual and stimulating photography. By capturing essential moments in everyday living and putting creative value to them, these ordinary mementos become inspiring works of art that can benefit future generations.

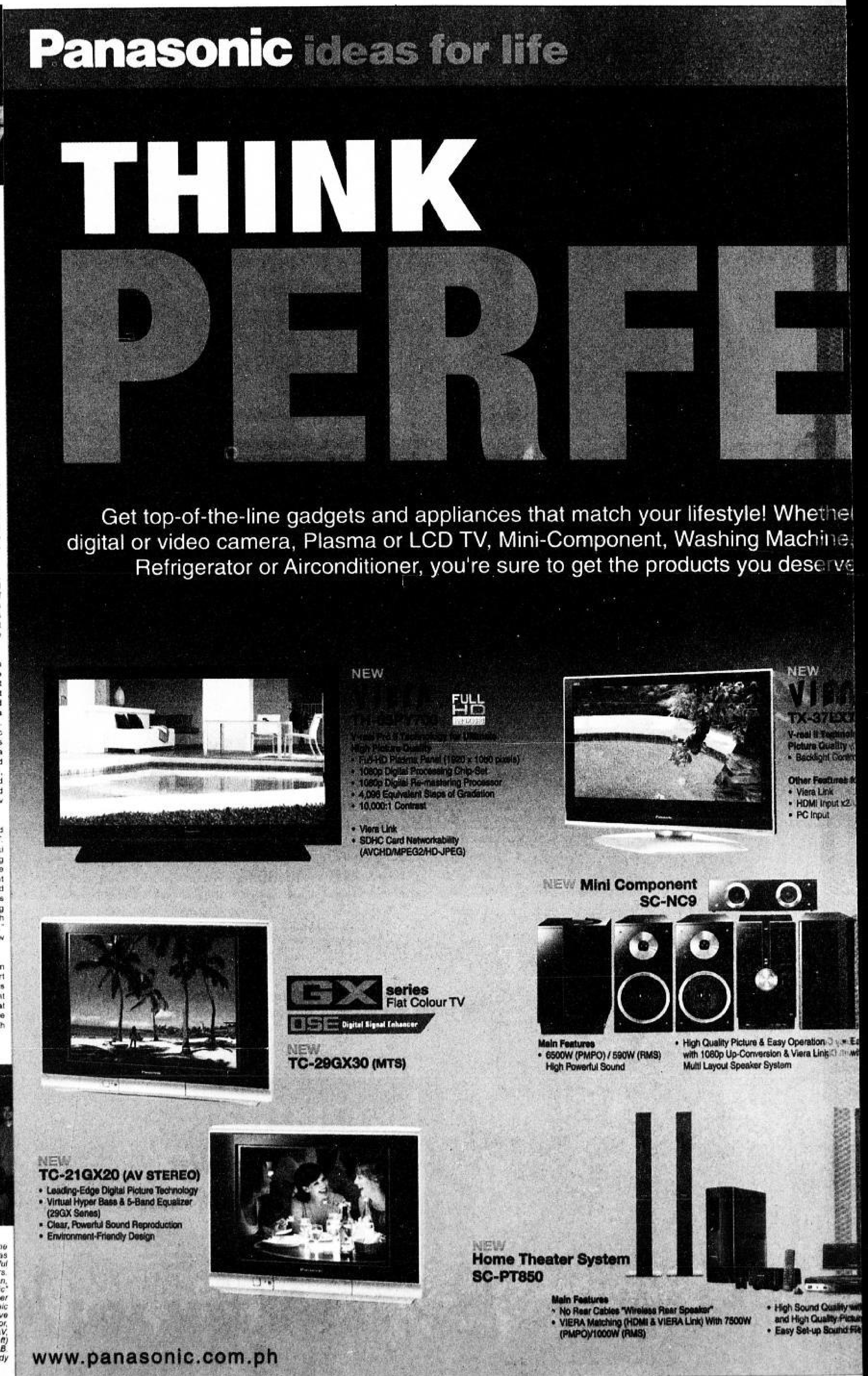
The top 10 finalists were judged according to creativity, relevance to theme, quality of presentation and visual impact that seeks to bring into surface the amount of imagination, artistic merit, originality and expressiveness of the photo, how it perfectly conveyed the contest's message, the amount of style, skill and craft that was put into the entry and how it effectively reached out to the receiver of the message.

Winning the top three spots are Raniel Castañeda from Quezon City, Antonio Rojas Jr. from Iloilo and Rosemarie Razon from Manila for "The Art of Life by Panasonic" that laid bare pure artistic flair using the simplest and most common subjects and situations. Castañeda's "Blind Messaging," which featured blind Igorots reveling on a cellphone's features, garnered an average score of 92.75. Rojas' "Skimboarder of Boracay", that showed acrobatic moves with the sparkling blue ocean and the white sands of Boracay in the background, seized the 2nd spot with a score of 91while Razon's "Twist of Fate", that highlighted childlike innocence in the middle of a complex livelihood, won the 3rd spot with an 85.14 average. The first, second and third prize winners won P50,000, P30,000 and P15,000, respectively. Each winner also received a new Panasonic camera.

The Art of Life by Panasonic board of judges comprised Rene Almeda, Panasonic Philippines President, T. Iwamoto, Panasonic Executive Director and Hiroyuki Iwaki, Sales and Marketing Director, along with Wig Tysmans, Mandy Navasero, George Tapan, Jeanne Young and Jim Paredes, five of the most prominent professional photographers today. These renowned lensmen also showcased their own artistic repertoire as they also paraded their creative portrayals, surrounding those of the winners, of the five elements of life through an exhibit hailed as "Living Passions by Panasonic." Their pictures on display were captured using the all-new Lumix DMC-L1.

As "The Art of Life" photography contest came in conclusion, Panasonic has proven that the synergy of art and innovation can produce satisfying results. As Panasonic successfully highlighted artistic achievement complemented by the sophistication of innovations that are available in the market today, its fresh ideas for life remain at the helm of the industry's technological strength for global competitiveness.

The quest for the development of art photography in the Philippines, spearheaded by Panasonic Philippines, was fully realized and manifested by the successful convergence of amateur and professional photographers. Shown in the photo are (from above-left) George Tapan, Wig Tysmans, Jim Paredes, "The Art of Life by Panasonic" 3rd placer Rosemarie Razon from Manila, 1st placer Raniel Castañeda from QC, Rene Almeda, Panasonic Philippines President, T. Iwamoto, Panasonic Executive Director, Hiroyuki Iwaki, Sales and Marketing Director, and Eduardo Alegrid, Category Manager for Digital AV, Panasonic Philippines. Also shown are (from bottom-left) "The Art of Life by Panasonic" finalists Victor R-Ace B. Alvarez, Jophel Ybiosa, Alexis Nuevaespaña and Mandy Navasero.



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He said that as in most feats, one could not do much if one was not driven to get to one's ultimate goal.

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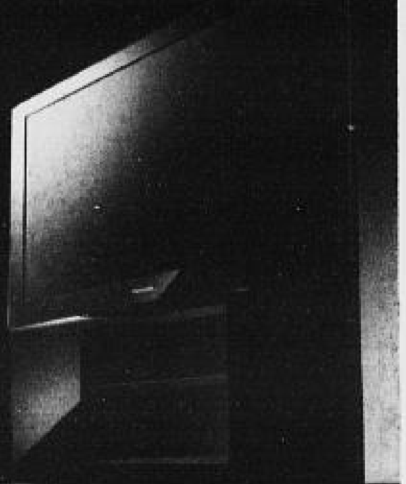
Panasonic's 2007 Line-Up of VIERA Flat-Panel TVs



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The limelight for technological evolution hovered more on Panasonic's latest VIERA Plasma TVs which provide even darker blacks and subtler gradation and give images exceptional detail on larger screens. Giving rich texture to even the finest movie details, Panasonic's technologies reproduce images that convey deep emotion and provide superb viewing quality with clarity and detail to bring sports and movies to life.

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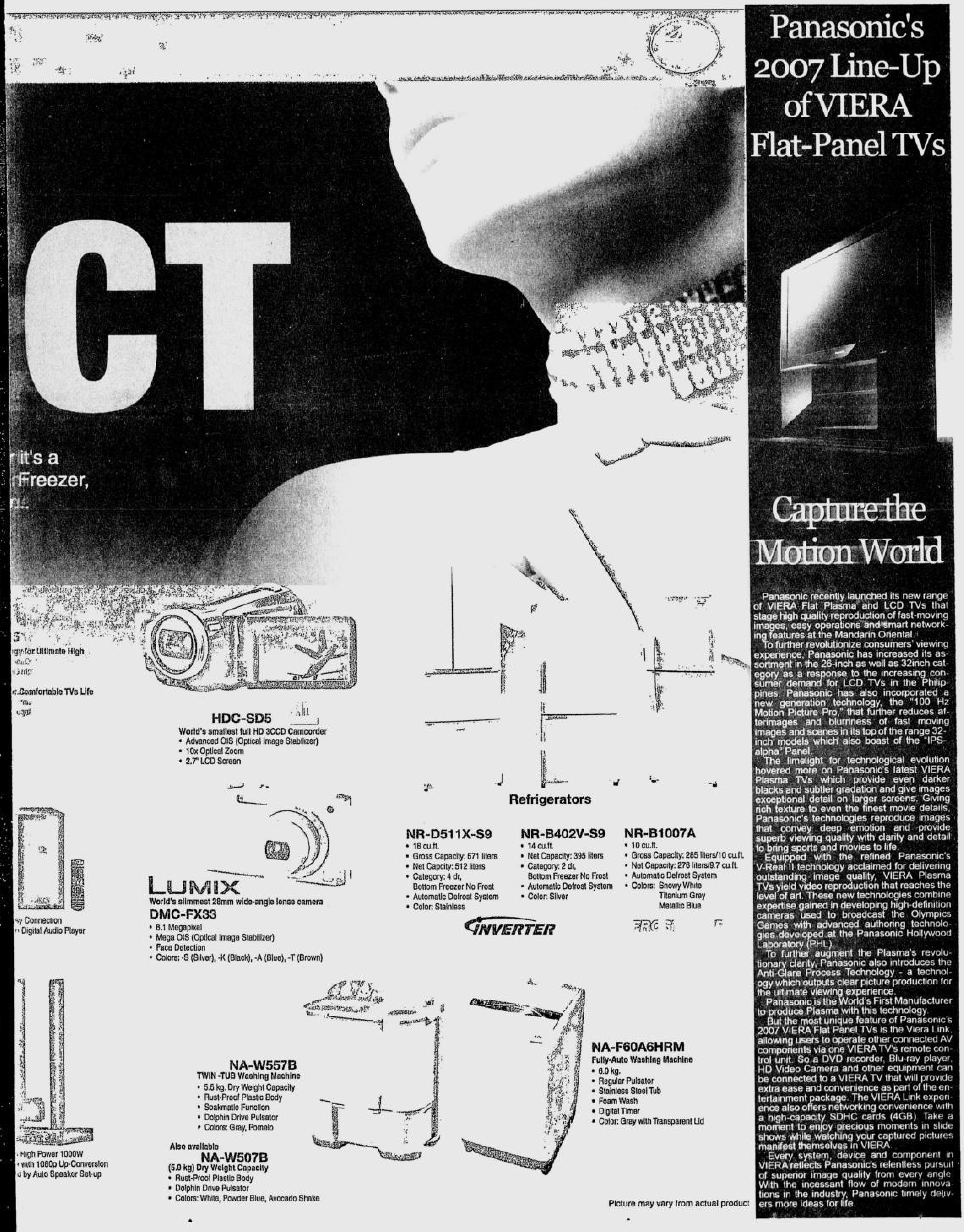

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Consistency

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO MUST HAVE shocked the other leaders attending the Singapore Summit of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations when she dispensed with diplomatese and bluntly told Burma's military rulers to restore democracy and free jailed opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi. Speaking on Monday, on the eve of the signing of the Asean Charter, Ms Arroyo warned that Burma's failure to return to the path of democracy would imperil its ratification by the Senate. "Until the Philippine Congress sees that happen, it would have extreme difficulty in ratifying the Asean Charter," she said.

EDITORIAL

The Charter, which will turn the 40-year-old organization into a rules-based legal entity, commits Asean members to "strengthen democracy, enhance good governance and the rule of law, and promote human rights and fundamental freedoms." Ms Arroyo told her colleagues: "The belief of the Filipino and the Philippine Congress, as well as my own, [is] that those who will sign the Charter agree to the objective, spirit and intent of establishing a human rights body: the full protection of human rights within the Asean."

The call for democracy and human rights in Burma was a theme President Arroyo would keep hammering at during the Singapore Summit. In a meeting with Burmese Prime Minister Thein Sein, she pressed for an acceleration of efforts to restore democracy in Burma. And she was still at it before her departure, saying that the Philippines remained "concerned that the forces of authoritarianism still move rather slowly toward democracy in Myanmar (Burma)." She then added: "Let me be clear. We embrace the advances of Asean but remain concerned about the pace of progress of Myanmar on the issue of human rights. We particularly deplore the treatment of Aung San Suu Kyi. She must be released."

In an organization that worships harmony and thrives on consensus, President Arroyo's frank and very public criticism of Burma was probably unprecedented, but certainly well-deserved. It was time somebody in Asean spoke out against Burma's military leaders, who have brutally suppressed the peaceful protests mounted by Buddhist monks recently and kept Suu Kyi under house arrest for 12 of the last 18 years. However, other Asean leaders apparently would rather risk derailing Asean's evolution into a legal body with a new Charter than surrender its time-honored practice of non-interference in each other's internal affairs. The summit concluded Thursday with a feeble call for Burma to release political prisoners, but Asean did not set a deadline or lay down sanctions for non-compliance.

Asean has also refused to join the European Union and the United States in imposing economic sanctions on Burma, claiming they would only hurt more Burma's poor. Earlier in deference to Burma's objection, Asean refused to listen to a briefing on the situation in that country by United Nations envoy Ibrahim Gambari, who managed to talk privately only to Ms Arroyo. Before that, the member-countries of Asean refused to support a United Nations resolution condemning Burma's violent suppression of anti-government demonstrations and expressing "grave concern" over the "systematic violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms" as well as "arbitrary detentions, including the use of physical violence, in response to peaceful protests." The Philippines was among the five Asean nations that abstained.

That was a curious vote, given the President's strong denunciation of Burma's military repression of dissent and violations of human rights. Some consistency between the President's words and official actions would perhaps deliver the message more effectively to Burma's rulers. Otherwise, Ms Arroyo's warning about the Charter's non-ratification unless Burma reforms, which would put the future of Asean on the line, would sound like an empty threat. And she would then become just like the human rights agency the Philippines fought hard to establish in Asean—all tongue, no teeth, according to Singaporean Foreign Minister George Yeo.

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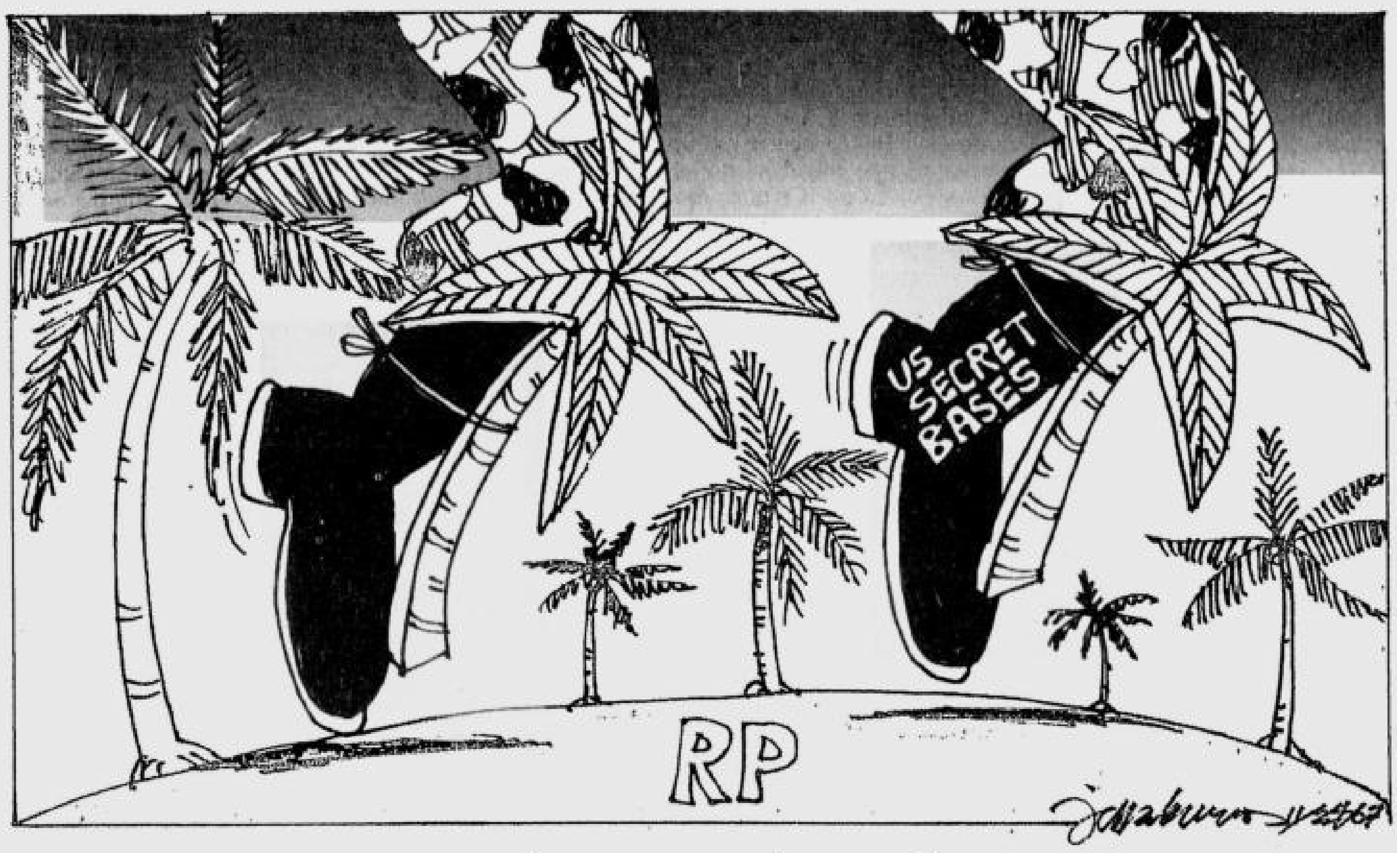


Remembrance of meals past

PUBLIC LIVES

Randy David

MY MOTHER WOULD HAVE TURNED 85 LAST week. Instead of visiting her grave at Himlayang Pilipino, where she lies buried beside my father's bones, I chose to go home to Betis, where she cared and cooked for a husband and 13 children. When she died in 2000, we restored our house as a tribute to our parents' patience and selflessness, and as a diary of our childhood.

On her birthday, I went to her room and looked at the pictures and clothes she left behind. I went to the kitchen and sat alone before the gleaming narra dining table, but I could neither see nor imagine her in any of them. Her memory, I surmised, resides not in the things we can touch or see. She lives, most of all, in our taste buds.

When I began to think of the meals she cooked for us, her presence became all at once palpable. At eight in the morning last Saturday, I felt a sudden yearning for *kilayin*, a type of pork *adobo* laden with lots of pig's liver and other organs. Naturally, we didn't have it in the house. The help had started to fry some eggs and slices of Spam for breakfast. It didn't seem right, I thought: the smell of food wafting from the kitchen collided with my reminiscence. All through my childhood, I never had Spam for breakfast.

So off I rode to the neighboring town of San Fernando where some restaurants have kept alive elements of the local food tradition. At Holiday Land, they were still serving breakfast fare, but the kitchen was busy preparing the lunch buffet for the day. I asked if I could order an early lunch from the range of buffet dishes. They showed me what they had, and sure enough, there was *kilayin*. It was all I wanted, with freshly boiled rice and coffee.

The meal was excellent, but it lacked something that, I realized later, could only be supplied by time. The *kilayin* that my mother served at breakfast was almost always a few days old, left over from a previous meal. This was a dish that improved in taste as it aged. My mother would send it to me in a well-sealed bottle during my early years in UP, when I had to struggle with the relentless monotony of cafeteria food.

We did not have a refrigerator at home then. By necessity, therefore, almost all the meals we took were freshly cooked. The occasional meat dishes, served sparingly and stretched out to a couple of days by my frugal mother, had to be of the type that would not easily spoil. Invariably they had to be vinegar-based, like *adobo*, *dinuguan*, *kilayin*.

My mother would sometimes buy half of a pig's head. She would carefully take out the brain, dip it in eggs and flour, and fry it, assuring us that this protein-rich dish would enhance our retentive powers. She would trim the fatty layers of skin around the neck, slowly fry it to extract the lard, and put it aside to flavor some vegetable dishes. She would then boil the entire thing until the skin turned luminous. Parts of it—the ears with the soft crunchy cartilage and the cheek went into a clear *sisig* laced with *nipa* vinegar, red onions, red chilies, and crushed black pepper. The meaty parts, the snout, and everything else were chopped and mixed with fresh pig's blood and then simmered in vinegar. We call it *tidtad* (chopped); elsewhere, it is known as *dinuguan*.

But we were mostly raised on fish and vegetables. The *bangus* or milkfish was our staple fish. Frying it was the quickest, and my mother made sure no part was wasted. She meticulously dug out the intestines of the fish, washed them, and deep-fried them separately. Fish broth, sweet-soured with guavas and lightly salted with one or two pieces of *tuyo* or dried fish, remains etched in my gastronomic memory. We call it *bulanglang*; elsewhere it is known as *sinigang sa bayabas*.

My favorite *bangus* dish, however, the rough equivalent of Marcel Proust's madeleine cookie, the one taste that he says "takes shape in the memory alone" so that it is never easy to recreate it, is the simple grilled milkfish. My mother's way was to stuff its belly with a mixture that was a separate dish in itself—chopped pork, red onions, ginger, garlic, pepper, fresh *bagoong* (shrimp paste), and the young fragrant leaves of the *tangle* plant. The fish was then wrapped in banana leaves and slowly grilled over charcoal.

Even this was already special. We grew up on the most simple but equally memorable dishes. After a rainy night, we would pick mushrooms from the banana clumps in our yard. My mother would put the umbrella mushrooms in a small bowl of water, add a little salt, and place the bowl inside the rice pot when the rice was nearly done. The outcome was a light consommé that preserved the earthy taste of this edible fungus.

On stormy days, my mother would serve us a quick broth that was as delicate as anything special I associate with her kitchen. It was a broth based on the lowly *tinapa* (smoked fish). The *tinapa* was lightly sautéed in garlic, onions, and lots of tomatoes. Water was added and the dish was brought to a boil. Before it was served, a beaten egg was added, and then the whole steaming bowl was covered with the young leaves of the *ampalaya*. The result was a symphony of three basic tastes: the sea-saltiness of smoked fish, the subtle sourness of a yellow tomato, and a hint of *ampalaya* bitterness.

I don't know how such dishes came about, but though they have vanished from our tables, they remain vivid in our mouths. Michael Pollan ("The Omnivore's Dilemma," 2006) calls them "ritual meals (that) link us to our history along multiple lines—family, religion, landscape, nation, and, if you want to go back much further, biology."

* * *

Comments to public.lives@gmail.com

Why Senate must ratify Jpepa

GET REAL

Solita Collas-Monsod

(The following is an edited version of the statement I made to the Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs yesterday at its hearing chaired by Sen. Mar Roxas, with Senators Ed Angara and Juan Ponce Enrile present. I offer it to the reader who may be wondering what the whole brouhaha is about.)

THE LAST TIME I WAS IN THE SENATE SERVING as a resource person in a hearing regarding the ratification of an international agreement was 16 years ago. The treaty under consideration in 1991 was the extension of the US-Philippines Military Bases Agreement (MBA), and I stood against its ratification. Today, the treaty under consideration is the Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement (Jpepa), and I stand squarely in favor of its ratification. In the MBA case, I concluded, as did a great number of my colleagues, that to the Philippines the expected costs of extension outweighed the benefits, and the Senate (or at least the required one-third plus one of its members) was of the same mind. In the Jpepa case, the expected benefits to the Philippines clearly outweigh the costs, and I sincerely hope that the Senate (or the required two-thirds) will again agree with me.

There's a lot at stake for the Philippines here. It is well to keep in mind at this point that Japan is our largest source of Official Development Assistance (ODA), which is more than 10 times larger than the United States ODA to us; Japan is our second largest source of Foreign Direct Investments (FDIs); our third largest trading partner (with whom, I might add, we now enjoy a trade surplus); as well as our third largest source of tourists. Japan is also the largest employer of overseas Filipino workers in East and Southeast Asia (2005), accounting for roughly 12 percent of total OFW remittances. She has been, on the whole, a steadfast, non-bullying development partner of the Philippines.

The Jpepa is aimed at extending and enhancing that partnership, at increasing not only the movement of goods, but also the movement of capital and labor between the two countries, something that has so far eluded the World Trade Organization as a whole, but which is being done bilaterally. And certainly, given the scarcity of capital and the abundance of labor in the Philippines, the advantages of such a partnership should be intuitively obvious. Not to mention the cooperation aspect, particularly technical cooperation that will help us achieve the efficiency or productivity growth that seems to have eluded us as a country.

But, even assuming that Jpepa will not lead to any of these economic benefits, that does not mean that our not undertaking it will allow us to maintain the status quo described above. Why? Because as of now, Japan's economic partnership agreements (EPAs) with at least the rest of the original Asean 6 are already either in effect or about to take effect. The presence of these EPAs with them and the absence of an EPA with us will inevitably result in at least some amount of trade and investment diversion from us—which we can ill afford, considering that the FDIs flowing to the Philippines are already the lowest among the Asean 6, and already lower than Vietnam.

Fortunately, the assumption is not borne out by findings of the studies conducted by the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS), as well as by different departments of the executive branch. On the benefit side, they point to increases in trade, and even more important, in investments in industry and services, with resulting increases in income and employment, downward pressure on prices, reduction in the number of poor—with estimates of the order of magnitude of these benefits. The agricultural sector, in particular, seems to be very enthusiastic about the agreement, as well as the business sector in general. There are also, although as yet unquantifiable, the improvements in efficiency because of Japanese technology, the transfer of which is bound to take place if only because of the coordination aspects of the agreement. These and the investment opportunities are by far the most important benefits of the Jpepa.

They also show increases in employment opportunities for OFWs in Japan—although some may consider that as a cost because of the brain drain implications.

On the cost side, there are decreases in government revenues because of tariff reductions, and the inevitable jobs lost when local firms cannot face the pressure of increased competition. The PIDS research comes up with estimates of these costs, and it is clear that they are, and I used the word advisedly, minimal. Why? For example, in the automotive industry, which employs 77,000 workers, only 15,000 are in the assembly subsector, and at most half of them (because the other half work for Japanese affiliated companies), or 7,500, are at risk from increased competition due to tariff reduction. But wait: it turns out that the reduction is going to be in 11 annual installments. Frankly, if they need more than 10 years to gear up for competition, they deserve no sympathy.

Other "costs" however, turn out to be totally without basis upon closer scrutiny. The conversion of the Philippines into a dump for Japan's toxic wastes is one of them. I will leave it to the lawyers to discuss other legal and constitutional "infirmities," which whether real or imagined, seem to be capable of being addressed without endangering the Jpepa.

The bottom line: The benefits of Jpepa far exceed its cost. Please ratify it.

Satisfaction with the way democracy works

SOCIAL CLIMATE

Mahar Mangahas

PUBLIC SATISFACTION WITH THE WAY DEMOcracy works was originally polled in the Eurobarometer, which is the European Commission's system of public opinion surveys in its members. It is now being polled in many other countries, including the Philippines, where Social Weather Stations has done it 43 times since 1991. I am discussing it now because the new 2007 Latinobarómetro (Economist magazine, Nov. 17, 2007) allows a fresh comparison with 18 Latin American countries.

Last June 2007, 54 percent of Filipino adults said they were either "very" or "somewhat" satisfied (*nasisiyahan*) with the way democracy works (*sa takbo ng demokrasya*) in the Philippines. That has been the highest level of satisfaction with the working of democracy reached, so far, during the Arroyo administration.

For satisfaction with democracy, a level of 54 percent is middling. There were two SWS polls about it in the Aquino period—in November 1991 (45 percent) and February 1992 (50 percent). Then satisfaction quickly shot up to 70 percent in October 1992, the first time it was surveyed in the Ramos period. It showed public elation at the first successful transition of power after the restoration of democracy in 1986. In the rest of FVR's time satisfaction with democracy averaged in the fifties, with a low of 46 (November 1994), and wound up at 64 (December 1997).

In July 1998, or right after Estrada took office, there again came a peak of satisfaction, also at 70 percent. Of course Erap, and more so FVR, did not get anywhere close to 70 percent of the vote. Seven out of ten, whoever they voted for, were simply content with how the democratic process had worked in the preceding presidential election. Satisfaction with the working of democracy stayed in the 60s up to mid-1999. From October 1999 to September 2000 it was 41-51 percent.

But there was no "honeymoon" with democracy in Arroyo's time. Satisfaction was only 34 percent in September 2001, and 44 percent in June 2004, in the first SWS post-election polls; so it started on a low note, and its high of 54 percent last June was only a middle note, going by Philippine experience.

Compared to other countries, however, the Philippines' recent 54 percent is not too bad. In the 2007 Latinobarómetro, only Uruguay (over 65 percent) and Venezuela (close to 60) are higher. From 50 down to 40 are the Dominican Republic, Costa Rica, Nicaragua and Bolivia. In the 30s are Panama, Chile, Ecuador, Argentina, El Salvador, Colombia, Honduras, Mexico, Brazil and Guatemala. Peru has less than 20 percent, and Paraguay has a tiny 10 percent, satisfied with how democracy works.

In the Spring 2006 Eurobarometer, the average satisfaction, in 25 EU countries, with the way democracy works was 56 percent, which was three points more than the previous year. The small countries Denmark (93) and Luxembourg (83) topped the list. In the 70s were Finland, Ireland, Austria, Netherlands, Sweden and Spain, and in the 60s were Belgium, Cyprus and the United Kingdom. In the 50s, which means average, were Czech Republic, Germany, Greece, Slovenia and Italy. In the 40s: Malta, Hungary, France, Estonia and Latvia. In the 30s: Poland and Portugal. At the bottom were Slovakia (25) and Lithuania (23).

Democracy versus authoritarianism. If most people in a country are dissatisfied with the way democracy is working, it means that most people want to improve on it. It does not necessarily mean that they want to abandon it. For instance, if you are unhappy with the way your car works, then you probably want it fixed, and don't necessarily want to go for a *calesa* instead.

The standard opinion poll question for finding public preference between democracy and authoritarianism asks which of the following does one agree with most: (A) "Democracy is preferable to any other form of government." (B) "Under some circumstances, an authoritarian government is preferable to a democratic one." (C) "For people like me, it does not matter whether we have a democratic or an authoritarian government."

In 10 SWS surveys from 2002 to the present, the (A) answers have always dominated, and been at least twice as many as the (B) answers. Last June, 53 percent of Filipinos said that democracy is always better, 19 percent said that authoritarianism is sometimes better, and 27 percent were indifferent, i.e., answered (C).

In Latin America, on the other hand, the preference for democracy is widespread but not universal. The 2007 Latinobarómetro finds it very high in Costa Rica (83) and Uruguay (75). In the 60s are Bolivia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Dominican Republic, Argentina, Panama and Nicaragua. None are in the 50s. With pluralities in the 40s are Mexico, Colombia, Peru, Chile and Brazil. In El Salvador and Honduras, both at 38 percent, it is the indifferent who dominate. In Paraguay (33) and Guatemala (32), however, the vote for democracy is less than the vote for authoritarianism.

* * *

The 2007 Latinobarómetro was done over Sept. 7 to Oct. 8, 2007 with a sample of 20,212 respondents in 18 countries, or an average of 1,122 per country. The Eurobarometer of Spring 2006 used 29,220 interviews in 29 countries, of which four were non-EU members; the standard sample size was 1,000, regardless of the size of the country. The SWS surveys' sample size of 1,200 is the global standard for a national survey.

* * *

Contact SWS: www.sws.org.ph or mahar.mangahas@sws.org.ph.

Boating lessons

YOUNG BLOOD

Mellanie C. Yubia

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—**Ed.**

THIS IS NO MOVIE; INSTEAD THIS IS EXPERIENTIAL. A month ago, I went on vacation to give myself a break from work and personal pressures. At first, I planned to go to a remote place barely touched by civilization. I wanted to be a bird, able to soar high, free for a few moments at least. But I had only three days for my most desired getaway, so I had to settle for Baguio.

Two days before my scheduled trip, a close friend who had gotten wind of my plan expressed her desire to join me for the same reason: to unwind. So, off we went to Baguio.

Burnham Park is my favorite place for strolling whenever I am in the city of flowers. I also love biking and I have always wanted to row ever since I learned how to do it. OK, I am no professional or expert on boat rowing. In fact, I first tried it when a kind soul had the patience to teach me the basics two years ago during a business trip. I must have been hooked, because I went rowing at every opportunity until that one-week business trip was over.

Now that I was back in the city, I couldn't wait to get hold of the oars once more. Thrilled, I hurriedly chose a boat to rent while telling my friend, "*Sa wakas maisasakay na kita* (Finally I can take you on a boat)."

The caretaker guided our boat off the dock. But alas, during the first five minutes or so after we were led to the center of the pond, we found ourselves stalled. "Oh, come on!" I murmured. "Where have my basic rowing skills gone?"

Holding the oars tightly, I attempted to row again trying very hard to remember how it was done, but to no avail. We were not making any headway. Embarrassment was creeping into me as my friend started to show signs of panic. The caretakers of the boat were anxiously looking in our direction, perhaps anticipating unwanted scenarios. But I did not lose hope.

I told my friend to calm down and give me time to collect my thoughts on how to row. I started looking around and watched the other people on their boats. I focused on how they positioned their bodies, particularly their arms and how they moved their oars. Then I mimicked their movements. We still were not making any progress.

"*Nay*, what's wrong?" I muttered to myself. "But damn if I am going to give up."

Then a thought occurred: maybe I should row faster and apply greater force. I tried it, and to my surprise, we began moving forward! We didn't get far at first, but what mattered most was that we were moving.

I closely observed the other rowers again and noticed that they were dipping their oars deeper into the water than I was doing. Time for another experiment! Gripping the oars tightly, I made a couple of strokes and off we went. "Hurrah, we are progressing!" I told myself as I repeated the motions.

As we advanced, I gradually remembered how to steer the boat properly—forward, to the left, to the right, backward—until I got the hang of maneuvering the boat in any direction I desired.

For the next two hours, my friend and I enjoyed steering and rowing around the man-made lake.

Yes, the hackneyed cliché is true: Practice makes perfect.

The experience made me realize that when faced with setbacks, I should not hesitate to humble myself and learn from others how to start and sustain an endeavor. Most importantly, it helped me gain more confidence in myself while reminding me that I am the captain of my ship in the ocean of life. It also taught me that I should not allow failure to disappoint and force me to inaction, otherwise I would sink or merely float around rudderless.

As my three-day vacation ended, I became confident that with the help of Providence I could always re-launch my vessel and steer it where I want to go. Yes, there will be hindrances, pain and pressures that could retard my progress or even stall me for a while. But my recent Baguio experience taught me that in order to achieve success, I should neither get tired nor be discouraged in launching fresh attempts again and again.

Mellanie C. Yubia, 26, is a BS Psychology graduate of the University of the Philippines in Tacloban. She works as a researcher in a manufacturing firm based in Quezon City.

Because it's there, because I can

COMMENTARY

Evelyn A. Mejillano

> Why, despite the aching joints, were we looking forward to the next Mentoring the Mentors sessions?

THE DRIVE FROM CAGAYAN DE ORO TO TUbod, the municipal capital of Lanao del Norte, was just a shade under three hours. The trip was quite pleasant as we rolled on well-kept concrete roads gently winding through the Misamis countryside. There were no storms that day, so the sun glistened off the waters of Panguil Bay.

With me on this trip were Dr. Eden Omboy, the former Butuan City Schools Division superintendent and Dr. Sol Francisco, a retired UP professor like myself. We had been invited to come to Tubod by Lanao del Norte Schools Division Superintendent Dr. Maria Luisa Mutia. Eden and Sol were with me to facilitate the Foundation For Worldwide People Power's Mentoring the Mentors sessions for the public school principals and master teachers of the entire province.

When we got to Tubod we were taken to the Mindanao Civic Center, a fully equipped facility where the Mentoring the Mentors sessions were going to be held for the next five days. I learned quite recently that "Tubod" loosely translates to "wellspring" in Visayan. How propitious, as that's what educators are supposed to be: a wellspring of learning for their pupils and students.

Actually, that was the second time that the FWWPP's Mentoring the Mentors Program was conducted for the Lanao del Norte Schools Division. We were here a year ago, to interact—and share what we had—with the first batch of public school educators and administrators.

According to census statistics, Lanao del Norte's population is a little less than half a million and the median age is a young 19 years. Almost a full third of the people of Lanao del Norte are Maranaos. The rest trace their roots from other parts of the region, with some even coming from as far as Central Visayas.

This particular batch of participants, on the other hand, were almost equally divided. There were 19 Maranao Muslims and 20 Christians. They were relatively young and energetic. Many of them had been principals or head teachers for no more than five years. For me, it was extremely gratifying to see them debunk the so-called acrimonious relationship between Christians and Muslims so often played up by the tabloid media. They were educators first and foremost. Without exception and without prodding, they put the interests of their learners first. In fact, throughout the sessions Eden, Sol and I got the clear impression that their students and pupils were all they cared about.

Dr. Ma. Luisa Mutia had a simple goal when she wrote the FWWPP requesting Mentoring the Mentors sessions for her division. She wanted the teachers in her division to "bring life back in the classroom" and respond to the learning needs of Lanao del Norte's school-age children.

Anybody who has ever been to Southern Philippines for quite some time knows how complicated things can be in this part of the country. The level of poverty is mind-numbing, as is the threat of armed conflict. Eden, Sol and I were particularly inspired by the quiet courage of our participants, who did not hesitate to say that they came to the sessions because they have a responsibility to fulfill. All of them were honest enough to say that they needed to be more open to change, and they were pleased that the Mentoring the Mentors program provided them with the climate to do so.

By the time the sessions were over, you could feel the renewed energy in them. This led me to reflect on my own experience. Sol, Eden and I are retirees. We have been educators for more years than we care to count. We need not prove anything to anyone. Yet why were we here in Lanao del Norte and why, despite the aching joints, were we looking forward to the next Mentoring the Mentors sessions wherever that might be?

Well, to quote Ron Jensen, I am "making a life, not just living." But more than that, by being among newer generations of educators, I continue to learn new things while I share the things I've learned over the years with my "mentees."

With the Internet, you can distill world experience on your screen with just a mouse click or two.

But there are certain things that remain timeless. The teacher and everything she stands for are one. The computer is a wondrous machine, but it is lifeless. You can choose to close your eyes and hit the power button and all that information just blinks away.

A committed teacher, on the other hand, will stay with you until you learn. That is why I will continue to be an advocate of the FWWPP's Education Revolution and join in as many Mentoring the Mentors sessions as my old bones will allow, because the teachers are out there, and because I can.

Dr. Evelyn Mejillano is the national coordinator of the Foundation for Worldwide People Power's Mentoring the Mentors Program. You can e-mail her through the FWWPP's executive director at (butchhernandez@gmail.com).

Romulo's elevator ride, Jamby's gender problem

BETWEEN DEADLINES

SINGAPORE—IT WAS RESOURCEFULNESS, CERtainly, but perhaps not the kind you read about in journalism textbooks. During the recently concluded Asean summit here, Filipino reporters trying to get the lowdown from Philippine officials on the implications of President Macapagal-Arroyo's statements versus Burma (Myanmar)—especially her appeal on behalf of detained opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi—made sure to get substantial quotes from Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo.

After the President gave her departure statement at the Shangri-La's 13th floor, they found a chance to interview him when he stepped inside an elevator. They crowded into the elevator with him, with one of them pressing buttons for other floors (they knew Romulo would get off on the third). The elevator thus stopped at the floors without anyone coming in or going out.

The tactic gave the journalists what seemed like five or more minutes to interview the foreign secretary, on an elevator ride that would have lasted maybe less than a minute. Businessmen in a hurry would have been ticked off, but Romulo readily answered all the questions.

It wasn't clear, though, whether Romulo knew the stunt was being pulled. *N. Bordadora*

* * *

MAKING WHOOPEE. When you see grown men in their suits jumping and whooping for joy, you can almost always be sure they've just landed themselves a big, fat deal.

Executives of the Lopez-owned First Gen Corp. were living proof of this last Wednesday when the consortium that the company led was declared the new controlling shareholder of government crown jewel PNOC Energy Development Corp.

With a bid of P58.5 billion, the First Gen-led consortium left the Gotianuns of Filinvest Development Corp. eating dust and (literally) scratching their heads in bewilderment. Other prominent bidders, the Aboitizes and San Miguel Corp., never even stood a chance.

Good thing the Philippine National Oil Co. was kind enough to let reporters witness the proceedings—which started at 1:30 p.m. and ended at almost 7 p.m. PNOC president Antonio Cailao even called the PNOC-EDC privatization "the most professionally run, with 100-percent transparency and a level playing field."

"This can be a model for other energy organizations to emulate," he said.

But people at the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. don't seem to want to take PNOC's lead. Reporters are not likely to witness anybody jumping for joy on the day of the National Transmission Corp. auction on Dec. 12, simply because none of them will be allowed to even enter the room where the submission of the final bids will take place.

So much for transparency. *A. Ho*

* * *

ARE YOU TALKING TO ME? Maybe they developed the habit after being grilled for three hours by a succession of male senators. But for some reason, two witnesses at the Senate hearing Wednesday into Malacañang's "cash gifts" kept on addressing Sen. Maria Ana Consuelo Abad Santos Madrigal, also known as "Jamby," as "Sir."

Bank of Commerce executive vice president Arturo Manuel Jr. punctuated some of his answers with "your Honor" or "Sir"; after some time, Madrigal interrupted him.

"I think we have a gender problem here. Do I look like a man?" Madrigal asked lightly, trying to inject some humor into the situation.

Manuel grinned sheepishly. However, as the question-and-answer went on, he again reverted to using "Sir."

When it was his turn to be grilled by Madrigal, Anti-Money Laundering Council executive director Vicente Aquino Jr. also used "Sir" in his replies.

Their continued use of "Sir" did not escape anyone's notice, but a patient Madrigal let the matter drop and went on with his, er, her questioning. *D. Pazzibugan*

* * *

STAYING ON MESSAGE. At a forum at the University of the Philippines last week, priest-turned-governor Ed Panlilio fielded many questions about his remarkable victory in Pampanga, about how such an adventure in hope could be replicated in other areas in the country, about whether he thought his running wasn't already a form of evangelization. (His answer: "any good thing a person does is tending towards evangelization.")

A question from an educator at the University of Asia and the Pacific, however, about whether it was time for the Philippines to embrace federalism and experiment with an electoral college, momentarily gave him pause. I didn't study political science, he started, and then quickly recovered: "Our problem is not the form of government, but values and disvalues." *J. Nery*

* * *

BLAST FROM THE PAST. From the Nov. 13, 1987 issue of the Philippine Daily Inquirer:

The World Bank is complaining that while the government has been complaining that it is not getting enough loans from abroad to finance its various economic programs, it could not even utilize all funds that are already in the pipeline.

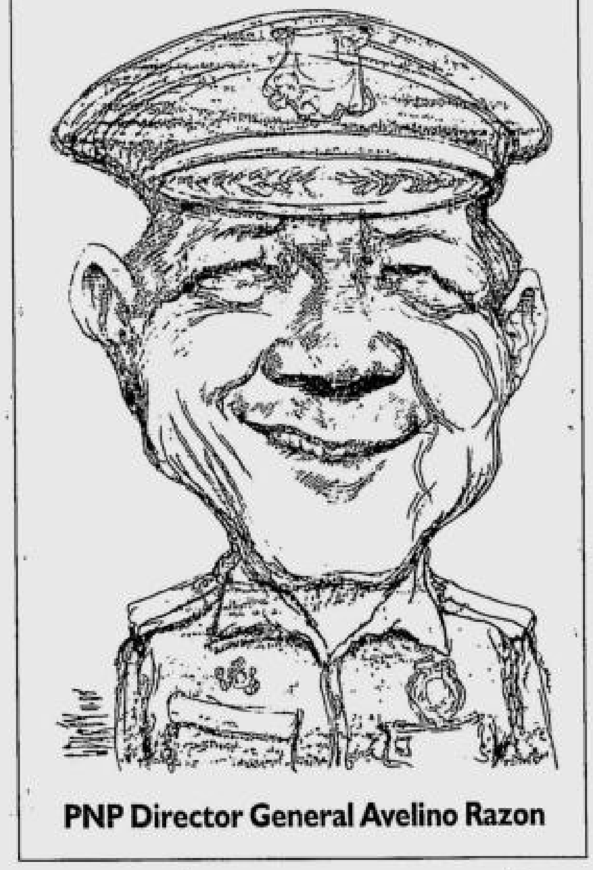
A Bank official said that there are about $1 billion in loans that it has extended to the Philippines that remain undisbursed.

The official has blamed the turtle-paced completion and implementation of projects and programs that are supposed to be financed by the loans as the principal reason for the backlog.

NOTICE TO YOUNGBLOOD CONTRIBUTORS:

Send your contributions by e-mail to youngblood@inquirer.com.ph together with your address, age and the school, course and year you're enrolled in or, if employed, the position you're holding and the company you work with. Contributions to Youngblood should not have been previously published.

IN THE NEWS



PNP Director General Avelino Razon

Wrong on Estrada pardon

IN EXECUTIVE CLEMENCY, THE President has the power to revoke a conditional pardon if a condition of that pardon is violated by the pardonee.

The rule is the same in judicial probation. The courts may revoke a judicial probation if any of its conditions is violated by the convict.

Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo did not condone the forfeitures imposed by the Sandiganbayan. In fact, the pardon order clearly set as a condition Joseph "Erap" Estrada's full compliance with the forfeiture aspect of the Sandiganbayan judgment.

Moreover, the last "whereas clause" of the order cited the commitment of Erap not to run again for public office as one of the reasons the pardon was granted. Erap accepted the pardon without hesitation. (Application and acceptance are mandatory in a pardon.)

GMA ignored the rules of the Board of Pardons and Parole (www.doj.gov.ph) when she pardoned Erap. No publication was made so that the public could comment on and/or oppose the idea of pardoning Erap. Instead, the pardon was rushed; in fact, compared to the other longstanding, if overdue, applications (of convicts as qualified as, if not more qualified than, Erap for pardon), it was given special treatment.

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez and former Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban are wrong in their conclusion that the reiteration in the pardon of the forfeiture aspect of the judgment was not a condition but merely a pro-forma affirmation by GMA of the dispositive part of the judgment, and that it was up to the Sandiganbayan to enforce it.

The order is clear: Erap was pardoned on condition that he would fulfill or comply with the forfeiture aspect of the Sandiganbayan judgment.

Under Article 94 of the Revised Penal Code (RPC), conditional pardon is a mode for the partial extinguishment of criminal liability.

Under Article 95 of the RPC, Erap must comply with the conditions of the pardon, otherwise, his pardon may be revoked and he can be arrested to serve the unexpired term of his penalty (see also Article 159, RPC).

Under Article 113 of the RPC, Erap is obliged to satisfy the civil liability that arose from his crime. Nobody believes Secretary Gonzalez anymore. He deserves to retire and rest.

The Panganiban opinion does not consider the holistic spirit and letter of the pardon order, in relation to the Constitution and the RPC.

—MANUEL LASERNA JR.,
LCM Law Offices, Las Piñas City,
lcmlaw@gmail.com

Great columns

I ALWAYS READ CONRADO DE Quiros' columns. I don't always agree with him but, free speech and all that, I would say that he is one of the very few writers who don't kiss President Macapagal-Arroyo's butt; he tells it like it is. I thank him for that.

Actually, I'm writing in reaction to his great columns about the 12-year-old girl who committed suicide. Great writing! It's a shame that the powers-that-be aren't doing a thing to alleviate the condition of the millions of Filipinos similarly situated: poor, hungry, forlorn, with no hope of and prayer for a better life.

To De Quiros, keep up the excellent writing. Comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable.

—MARK LANE,
zane1020@yahoo.com

'P40-M' hospital equipment in use

THIS REFERS TO THE NEWS item titled "COA finds P203-M defective equipment in 15 hospitals," written by Jocelyn R. Uy. (INQUIRER, 10/22/07)

According to that report, "the Bicol Regional Training and Teaching Hospital (BRTTH) has the most number of "out of order" hospital equipment costing over P40 million.

Asked about this matter, the hospital's chief, Dr. Rogelio Rivera, said that the Commission on Audit (COA) has no such report in its Exit Audit Conference, Audit Observation Memoranda and Annual Audit Report.

The COA report on the Value Money Audit did state that BRTTH has an equipment, amounting to P112,000, that could not be used because there were no manuals of operations, brochures, installers and other accessories. However, Doctor Rivera said that the equipment is now functioning and is being used by the hospital.

—ROBERT LOUIE P. SO, MD,
head executive assistant,
Office of the Secretary,
Department of Health,
San Lazaro Compound,
Sta. Cruz, Manila

The news story was based on a 2006 COA report on the DOH, which stated that the BRTTH has P40,161,905.18 worth of "out of order" hospital equipment—aside from the P112,000 defective equipment and the P6,444,659.08 worth of "unutilized despite not being defective" equipment. This was illustrated through a chart, in the section "Procurement, Utilization and Maintenance of Hospital Equipment" of its Value Money Audit report, which also identified the other hospitals found to have defective and unutilized equipment.

—JOCELYN R. UY,
reporter, Inquirer

Panasonic recently awarded the winners of the freshly concluded "The Art of Life by Panasonic" photo contest that behold pure creative of Filipino's propensity for photography and united the professional photography maestros as part of the Board of Judges. Shown in the photo (from left) are master photographer George Tapan, 3rd placer Rosemarie Razon from Manila, 1st placer Raniel Castañeda from Quezon City, master photographer Wig Tysmans, Rene Almeda, Panasonic Philippines President, who holds the work of art of 2nd placer Antonio Rojas Jr. from Iloilo, T. Iwamoto, Panasonic Executive Director, Jim Paredes, Hiroyuki Iwaki, Sales and Marketing Director and Mandy Navasero.

Poetry in Panasonic's technology

Panasonic, one of the country's premier movers for innovation, recently staged an afternoon of quintessential photography exhibit entitled "Living Passions by Panasonic," fronted by five of the country's distinguished professional photographers, as Panasonic also awarded the winners of the freshly concluded "The Art of Life by Panasonic" photo contest, at the Trinoma Activity Center.

Pinoy lens gurus Wig Tysmans, Mandy Navasero, George Tapan, Jeanne Young and Jim Paredes exhibited their artistic and dramatic portrayals of water, earth, wood, metal and fire, respectively, in vividly grand works of art which fully characterized desire, passion and zest for living through the five elements of life. Experimenting on light, angles and exposures, these photographers successfully captured the beauty of life that is oblivious to the naked eye using Panasonic's all-new, state-of-the-art Lumix DMC-L1.

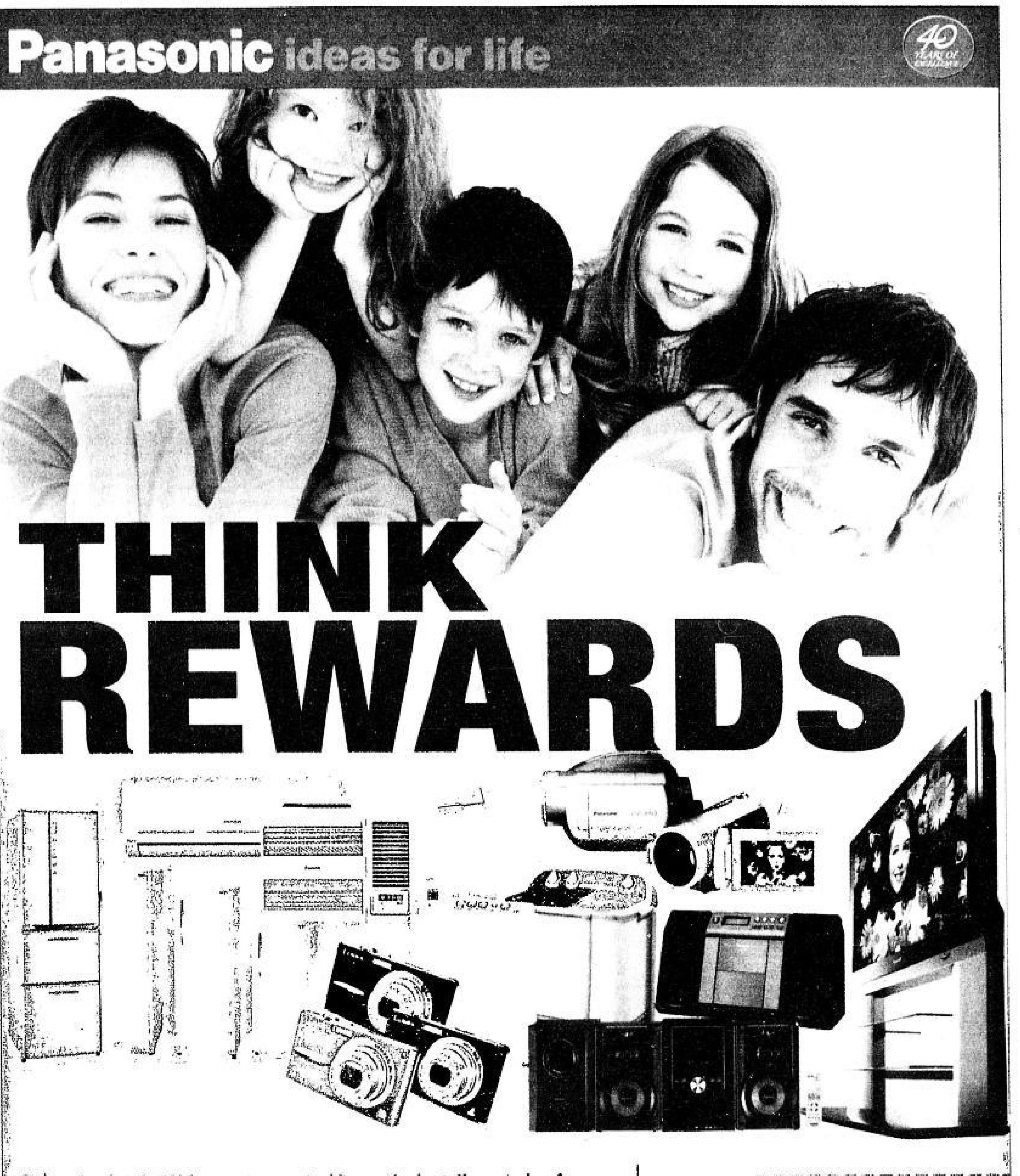
Equipped with topnotch expertise and natural knack for piotographic excellence, Tysmans, Navasero, Tapan, Young and Paredes joined forces with the powerhouse team of Panasonic honchos Rene Almeda, Panasonic Philippines President, T. Iwamoto, Panasonic Executive Director and Hiroyuki Iwaki, Sales and Marketing Director, for the final judging of the top 10 entries for "The Art of Life by Panasonic." hundreds of amateur and professional photographers from all over the country that participated, the top three winners who bested them all are 1st placer Raniel Castañeda, with his entry entitled "Blind Messaging," from Quezon City, 2nd placer Antonio Rojas Jr., with his entry 'Skimboarder of Boracay," from Iloilo City and 3rd placer Rosemarie Razon, with "Twist of Fate," from Manila,

Living Passions by Panasonic seeks to intensify an ardent love for life and living through a dramatic portrayal of the Five Elements of Life, believed to be invisible energies that effectively influence everyday existence. The five elements, composed of wood, earth, water, metal and fire, are considered significant (based on ancient Chinese wisdom) in boosting one's innate creativity and gaining power over our lives.

Navasero plowed on the deepest splendor of the Earth to depict the physical and sensual art of living. Tysmans plunged and got swayed by Water that overflowed with emotion and intuition. Young vividly surrendered to the unyieldingness and strength of Metal. Tapan carved and constructed new beginnings with Wood as Paredes embraced the fierce and flaming passion of Fire in various flames and embers.

Inspired by the success of the piotographic venture, Panasonic Philippines President Rene Almeda believes that with the available media that can hype up artistic propensity, everything is possible. "We discovered just how talented Filipinos are and how their rich imaginations further exceed limitations and bounderies," he said. "As we progress with our state-of-the-art innovation and develop new concepts, designs and features every minute, we also bring these new ideas into a greater reality."

Panasonic Sales and Marketing Director Hiroyuki Iwaki (center) poses with acclaimed professional photographers (from left) Mandy Navasero, George Tapan, Jim Paredes and Wig Tysmans, representing illustrious photographic flair with the aid of outstanding and consumer-friendly innovations.



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'Mina' roars toward Bicol today

From page A1

At least two people yesterday drowned in floods in Buhi and Caramoan towns in Camarines Sur triggered by heavy rains.

By 5 p.m., Mina had slowed its approach from 9 kph to 7 kph, delaying its expected landfall in Catanduanes today by several hours.

This could bode ill for the country, according to experts at the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa).

"No other weather system, like a high pressure area, is pushing it, that's why it has slowed down," senior weather specialist Robert Sawi said. "But once it hits land, it will be more destructive because the rains and winds will last longer in one area."

Cruz said: "[If it's slower], the onslaught of the strong winds will take more time in an area. Structures, trees and crops that will be subject to strong winds should be our concern."

At its current speed, the typhoon could hit the southern part of Catanduanes tonight.

Metro Manila is expected to have cloudy weather with isolated rainshowers, according to Sawi.

Rescue at sea

The Coast Guard said 30 of 55 Filipino fishermen had been rescued after their boat sank due to bad weather off Pag-asa Island in Palawan late Thursday night.

It said it had deployed a search and rescue team and was coordinating with the Chinese maritime authorities to find those missing.

"The China Maritime Coordinating Center informed the Coast Guard about the incident around 10 p.m.," spokesperson Lt. Armand Balilo said.

In Cebu, MV South Pacific ran aground but its 50 passengers and 19 crewmen were later rescued, the coast guard said.

State of calamity

Relief officials have stepped up evacuation of threatened areas in Albay, Camarines Sur, Camarines Norte, Sorsogon, Catanduanes in Bicol and Marinduque.

Albay has been declared under a state of calamity. A similar declaration remained in force in Catanduanes.

As of 11 a.m., the Bicol Office of Civil Defense reported there were already 16,978 families or 195,247 persons evacuated in the whole region.

Albay had the biggest number of evacuees followed by Camarines Sur, with 7,404 families; Camarines Norte, 484 families; Catanduanes, 356; and Sorsogon, 304.

Camarines Sur

The provincial disaster coordinating council in Camarines Sur reported that as of 12 noon Friday, there were 8,096 families or 37,590 persons evacuated in 16 towns.

Gov. Luis Raymond Villafuerte ordered the distribution of food packs to evacuees in 34 centers before the situation worsened.

Evacuation continued in all coastal and lakeside areas using military and local government unit trucks.

Albay

People were fleeing more than 90 hazard-prone villages in Albay.

The provincial government said it was targeting the evacuation of around 654,000 persons, 236,000 of whom were categorized as "on-site evacuees" to be housed in government-run shelters.

The remaining 418,000 persons were expected to relocate to stronger houses nearby or on safer grounds.

These "off-site" evacuees would still be given access to relief goods.

At least 141,600 people were being force-evacuated on or before the 8 p.m. Friday deadline.

Salceda's priorities

Salceda said the priorities for evacuation were those living in flood-prone areas near river channels, gullies, and those in the eastern seaboard of the Albay gulf.

Places covered by the eastern seaboard are Tabaco and Legazpi and the towns of Tiwi, Malinao, Malilipot, Bacacay, Sto. Domingo, Manito and Rapu-Rapu.

NIÑO JESUS ORBETA/INQUIRER SOUTHERN LUZON

EVEN BEFORE THE STORM, people had been arriving by the truckloads at the Taysan Elementary School in Legazpi City, the designated evacuation center for residents of Barangay Mabinit.

Meteorologists said the northern areas of the eastern seaboard were particularly at risk from storm surges.

Some 44,913 people living in lahar zones had also been prioritized for evacuation by Thursday night.

Public and private schools, barangay halls, chapels and churches served as common temporary shelters for the evacuees.

Catanduanes

At least five villages in four towns of the province have remained impassable since Thursday owing to landslides and rockfalls.

Catanduanes Gov. Joseph Cua said relief items consisting of 1,000 bags of NFA rice and boxes of sardines could not be transported to at least 2,000 families housed in evacuation centers province-wide.

More than 200 passengers bound for Catanduanes were stranded at the Tabaco International Port.

Sorsogon

Fearing a repeat of the supertyphoon that hit Sorsogon last year, thousands of residents streamed to various evacuation centers.

Residents along coastal villages secured their boats—a precious possession among fishermen. Fishing boats were either kept inside the owner's houses or carried to evacuation centers.

As of Thursday afternoon, the city disaster coordinating council recorded around 20,000 evacuees at various centers.

Mayor Leovic Dioneda said they expected more evacuees and might carry out a forced evacuation should the situation worsen.

Marinduque

People living in coastal and low-lying areas and riverbanks and those living near dams and landslide-prone places had been asked to evacuate.

Jaime Barbosa, Marinduque provincial administrator, said classes in all levels were suspended and provincial personnel were sent home early.

At least 500 passengers were stranded at the Allen port in Northern Samar after the Coast Guard barred all sea craft from leaving port.

In Pililla, Rizal, some 3,000 residents of a village lost their water supply after a landslide damaged pipes that carried water from the upland to taps in mountainside homes.

Houses in Barangay Niogan were cut off from the main water source, the Batlag creek, after a rush of mud, boulders and water rumbled down a hill around 7:30 a.m. yesterday, local officials said.

Stronger than 'Lando'

Pagasa's Prisco Nilo said late yesterday afternoon that Mina had not moved.

"We are having difficulty in projecting where it will hit. But our projection is toward Bicol Region," Nilo said in a briefing at the National Disaster Coordinating Council in Camp Aguinaldo attended by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Ms Arroyo noted that Mina was three times stronger than Typhoon "Lando," which cut across the Visayas region a few days ago.

"It would be worse if we don't take strong measures," Ms Arroyo said.

Nilo said Mina was expected to be off the coast of Oriental Mindoro by Sunday morning and past Mindoro by Monday morning.

Target: Zero casualties

Bernardo Alejandro, chief of the Bicol Office of Civil Defense, said most of the evacuees, came from villages in Camarines Sur and Albay near the foot of Mayon Volcano, where the threat of lahar loomed.

"The evacuation is ongoing ... We are hoping to meet our target of zero casualties," Alejandro said.

Public Storm Signal No. 3 was raised in the provinces of Catanduanes, Sorsogon, Albay, Burias Island, and the Camarines provinces.

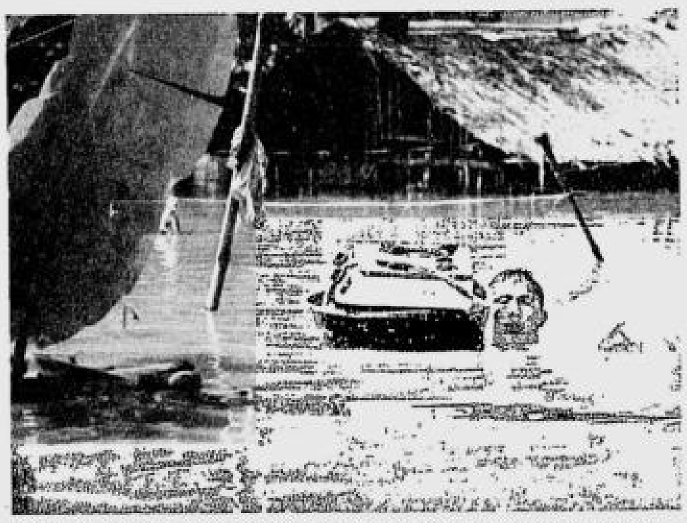
Signal No. 2 was raised in southern Quezon, Polilio Island, and the provinces of Marinduque, Romblon and Masbate.

Signal No. 1 was raised in the Mindoro provinces, the rest of Quezon, Batangas, Laguna, Rizal, Aurora, Isabela, Quirino, and the Calamian Group of Islands.

Pagasa said the storm's winds would be felt in Metro Manila.

Metro Manila was last hit by a supertyphoon in late 2006, when "Milenyo" downed power and communication lines and billboards along major roads in the metropolis.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) said military units in Bicol as well as Metro Manila had been alerted. *With reports from Bobby Labalan, Fernan Gianan and Gerald Gene Querubin, Inquirer Southern Luzon; Joey A. Gabieta, Inquirer Visayas, and Margaux C. Ortiz, Tarra Quismundo and Alcuin Papa in Manila*



EDGARDO Napao hangs on to his belongings retrieved from his house, which had been submerged by floodwaters in Bustos, Bulacan. EDWIN BACASMAS

TO THE RESCUE: Melvin Agnustura and Lucky Lopez were playing basketball when they espied this dog named Galis in the floodwaters. They jumped in to guide Galis to safety. EDWIN BACASMAS

LANDSLIDE IN PILILLA, RIZAL: Boulders and mudflow litter the foot of a mountain in Pililla. JOAN BONDOC

Bulacan village makes clean break from its filthy past

From page A1

them into fertilizer for sale to rice farmers.

"This has worked wonders for the people because it has tremendously reduced the garbage in the village," says Tuktukan barangay chair Romeo Tonog, who is in charge of the ecology center here.

Award-winning

After the biodegrable trash is segregated from the nonbiodegrable trash at homes and collected for composting at the ecology center, only a small volume of plastic items is left to be recycled, he says.

This is in stark contrast to Meycauayan City and Marilao town, recently named two of the "worst polluted places" by the Blacksmith Institute. This is a New York City-based organization supporting pollution-related environmental projects. One such project is the Polluted Places Initiative, which identifies polluted sites throughout the world by means of an online nomination process.

Not surprisingly, Barangay Tuktukan has drawn visits from nearby town officials who are looking for ways to end their garbage woes. It also won an award, Gawad Galing Barangay, in 2005 from the Bulacan provincial government.

Ecology center

The hub of the barangay's solid waste management program is a roofed, warehouse-like ecology center that sits on a 250-square-meter lot in the middle of a ricefield built with local government funds.

Here, some 600 kilograms of biodegradable garbage collected from homes by "eco-boys" in pedicabs (bicycles with a side car) are dumped every day for composting. Nonbiodegradable items are sold by residents to junk shops.

Another team of workers mix the pile of fruit and vegetable peelings, fish and animal innards, and food leavings with a sack of coconut dust. The pile is left alone to decompose for 25 to 28 days.

The result is an odorless, finely textured fertilizer that is sold P10 per kg to vegetable and rice farmers, not only in Tuktukan but in nearby barangays and towns.

Lessons for Manila

A farmer, who has taken up organic farming, has bought 50 sacks of the fertilizer at P100 per sack for his 3.2-ha ricefield in San Rafael town, also in Bulacan.

The fertilizer has also been given away for free, and has ended up in a vegetable patch in a public elementary school across the barangay hall, where the produce are cooked at lunch and served to malnourished pupils.

So far, the barangay has been earning a net income of P2,500 a month from the sales, an amount that goes to the payment of salaries of the center's personnel and maintenance of the pedicabs, among others.

"If the local government is really determined, it can be done," Tonog says.

Indeed, Barangay Tuktukan can teach a thing or two on solid waste management to residents of Metro Manila, or elsewhere who still rely on garbage trucks to pick up their trash and dump them somewhere else.

Bangon Kalikasan

Tuktukan's transformation did not happen overnight.

Getting the municipal dumpsite in their barangay closed down was tough enough. Weaning the residents off the bad habit of just throwing away their bag of garbage onto the front yard was even tougher.

For years, the dumpsite along McArthur Highway had been a bane for the residents. The stench of stinking garbage filled the air and made people sick. Its proximity led to the closure of a commercial establishment across it.

After receiving a complaint about the stink, Bangon Kalikasan, an environmental nongovernment organization, helped the residents and officials lobby with then Environment Secretary Elisea Gozun, Bulacan Gov. Josefina de la Cruz and then Guiguinto Mayor Ambrosio Cruz Jr. to shut down the dumpsite. They succeeded in August 2004.

The former dumpsite, which is on a 3-hectare property, is now overrun with weeds.

Then came an agreement between the Bangon Kalikasan, residents and officials to adopt an ecological resource management in Guiguinto, and put up ecology centers in the barangay. Tuktukan was the first to embrace it.

Start at home

"Our group believes that an ecology center will never succeed if there's a dumpsite," Bangon Kalikasan president Joey Papa says. "Besides, a garbage truck scatters bacteria as it goes around a barangay."

The next step for the NGO was to orient municipal and barangay officials on segregation, composting and recycling, and their beneficial effects in helping cut down carbon dioxide emissions.

"We taught them [why it was important to recycle]—from the values of waste management to global warming. We made them understand what a barangay can do to help reduce carbon dioxide emissions," Papa recalls.

"The best practice is house segregation, composting and recycling. If the trash is managed at home, there won't be any waste to bring out. Zero waste, that's the goal of the Zero Waste Society," he adds.

Good example

But when the time came for barangay officials to start segregating their waste, there was resistance.

"We taught the mothers to take care of segregating the household trash. Some were angry. Some even threatened, 'Sir, we won't vote for you the next time around,'" narrates Tonog, who gained a fresh term in late October's barangay elections.

"Eventually they got used to the system. It can be done if there's a consensus among residents, but it's important that the municipal or provincial government lead the way," he adds.

At least three other barangays in Guiguinto have followed Tuktukan's example, and have gone a step further: They're now using composting equipment.

INQUIRER Visayas

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Island villagers survive on sea 'mines'

By Carla P. Gomez
Sagay City, Negros Occidental

CHRISTMAS LANTERNS, CHANDELIERS and necklaces come from "mines" in the sea off Sagay City, Negros Occidental.

These ornaments are actually made of bubble shells or dead shells found in shallow craters off the shores of the three-island Barangay Molocaboc. The islands are visible only during low tide.

After heavy rains, unusually large amount of shells get washed into these craters, called "sea mines," according to village chief Antonio Pasaylo.

And no matter how many sacks of bubble shells are harvested, more appear from nowhere the next day, said Pasaylo.

Bubble shells harvested by villagers are sold for about P25 a kilo to nearby Cebu and to handicrafts producers in Molocaboc.

Estelita Lobaton Fernandez, 67, has been making a living off the shells from these "mines" for 25 years.

"We sell the shell items we make at fiestas in towns and cities in Negros Occidental and even as far as Iloilo and Cebu," she said.

The mining of shells is just one of several sources of income in this quaint barangay in the middle of the sea that is made up of three islands—the 120-hectare Molocaboc Daku, the 80-hectare Molocaboc Diut, and the 20-hectare Matabas.

In Molocaboc, 85 percent of the residents rely on fishing for their livelihood.

But they also earn from gathering sea cucumbers used for herbal medicines, from making dried fish such as *danggit*, from sweet atis grown in Molocaboc, and from "sea ranching."

MOLOCABOC villagers harvest fish from their ranch in the sea during low tide. CARLA P. GOMEZ

Sagay City Mayor Alfredo Marañon Jr., who had also served as congressman of the second district of Negros Occidental, introduced sea ranching, Pasaylo said.

It is done by creating a hole or an artificial habitat on tidal flats in the sea using used tires and large stones. Fishermen then lure fish to their holes and in three to four months are able to harvest about 20 kilos of mature fish.

At about P80 per kilo, fishermen earn an additional income of about P2,000 every harvest time, Pasaylo said.

Marine sanctuary

A visit to Molocaboc with its rich marine life is a gastronomic delight with its abundant supply of fresh fish, seashells and crabs.

Delsa Iwayan, 59, said they not only dry the fish they catch, they make "ginamos" (fish caviar) out of its intestines.

Molocaboc is part of the 32,000-hectare Sagay Marine Sanctuary started in 1972 by then Congressman Marañon to restore marine life in the area once destroyed by dynamite fishing and other illegal practices.

No fishing zones have been set up to allow fish stock to recover. Patrols and ranger stations have also been created to prevent poaching and the use of illegal methods like bomb and cyanide fishing in the sanctuary.

The planting of hundreds of hectares of mangroves in the marine reserve has been boosted this year by biorocks, which were set up by Filipino and American graduate students from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in the United States.

The biorocks are made of steel mesh structures placed underwater powered by solar panels and wind turbines.

Fragments of corals are placed on the steel mesh allowing them to grow five times faster because of the power attached to the mesh, Roberto Togle of the Sagay Marine Reserve said.

Five biorocks powered by a wind turbine and solar power have been set up in Molocaboc waters and four in Carbine Reef in the marine reserve, he said.

Foot walks

Molocaboc has not been spoiled by modernity.

Children of the three islets go to school by walking across a 1.2 kilometer-foot walk through the sea.

Residents use giant jars to store rain water because no fresh water springs from wells.

Cars and jeeps are also non-existent in the village.

The current barangay captain of Molocaboc, Antonio, took over from his father Rogelio Pasaylo, 68, who was village chief for 20 years.

Rogelio recalled how, before Negros Occidental Gov. Joseph Marañon, the former mayor of Sagay and the brother of the incumbent city mayor, built a 1.2-km foot walk connecting Molocaboc Daku to Diut, students from the smaller island had to wade through seawater to get to the high school on the bigger island.

It was dangerous because when the tide was high or when it rained, the children had to swim across, Rogelio said.

"Now going to school is made easier for our children," he said.

Molocaboc residents get around through their village through narrow foot walks. There are no wide roads for vehicles. In fact, in one section of a foot walk, a *balete* tree remains in the middle of the path.

The generator on the island provides power to villagers only from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m.

For this barangay in the middle of the sea, the conveniences of the modern world may not all be there, but the unspoiled gifts of nature that allow the villagers to thrive remain because of their vigilance.

It is a village free of pollution and stress that comes with the rapid pace of development.

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It's time everyone flies.

San Lorenzo Ruiz unites Iloilo Chinoy families

By Hazel P. Villa
Iloilo City

DURING RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS, the Roman Catholic faithful merge at the Jaro Metropolitan Cathedral, seat of the archbishopric of Western Visayas. The cathedral has the unique feature of having all-male saints in its Romanesque-Baroque interiors.

Outside, at its leftmost part, when one faces the Cathedral, is the shrine of San Lorenzo Ruiz who was canonized and declared the first Filipino saint on Oct. 18, 1987 in Rome and whose feast day falls on Sept. 28.

Ilonggos with a sense of humor opine that there isn't room enough for another male saint that the venerated Chinese-Filipino saint had to make do with an image seen all too publicly and open to the ravages of time and weather.

However, the Chinese-Filipino Roman Catholics here would rather have San Lorenzo Ruiz seen by all and remind the faithful of his sacrifices in the name of his faith, having been martyred in Japan in 1637 for refusing to give up his belief in Christ.

BICOL parishioners celebrate the feast day of the first Filipino saint San Lorenzo Ruiz in Tabaco City in Albay. NIÑO JESUS ORBETA

"The most common trait we have with San Lorenzo Ruiz is our being Chinese-Filipino. Many Chinoys want to be identified with him but the important thing is that he stood up for his faith and is a uniting factor for us Chinoys," said Lorenzo "Larry" Ong, a retired businessman and former Iloilo City councilor.

The story behind the 10-feet image of the saint cast in white cement finish is interesting for it got together three of Iloilo 's prominent Chinese-Filipino families for the project. It also became the catalyst for the discovery of a talented but unknown Chinese sculptor and his wife who settled in Iloilo in the early '80s.

According to Ong, the idea for a shrine dedicated to San Lorenzo Ruiz came to be in 1990 when he and close family friend and business partner Jose "Joe" Juantong (whose real family name is Ong, as in Juan T. Ong) of plastics manufacturing company Golden Portals Industries Inc. (GPII), were conversing.

The older Juantong was supportive of Ong's political career that spanned from 1989 to 1992 and 1994 to 2001, and in the course of one conversation, said in Hiligaynon, "Let's put up a shrine in honor of San Lorenzo Ruiz and also because he is your namesake."

Ong then added that GPII, the corporation owned by the Juantong and Ong-Chuan families, would spend for the shrine dedicated to his namesake San Lorenzo Ruiz.

Being the eldest, Ong is the Ong-Chuan's financial and family administrator whose younger brothers Eddie and Rolando Ong sit in the board as trustees of the Ong Chuan family's shares of the Juantong-managed GPII and Golden Gate Realty Corp.

With the go signal coming from then Jaro Archbishop Alberto Piamonte and the then Auxiliary Bishop Msgr. Jose Gamboa, Ong proceeded to go about preparing for the construction of the shrine.

Meticulous and himself an artist, Ong went around Iloilo to look for that one sculptor who had fine craftsmanship to capture the character of the Chinoy saint but none came to his standards.

While minding his textile business downtown, a Chinese woman who could barely speak Hiligaynon approached Ong and while talking, said her pure Chinese husband Victor Po was a sculptor.

"I went to the Po home at Simon Ledesma St. in Jaro and Victor had the kind of workmanship, eye for detail, and sophistication that I wanted," said Ong, 62, the Ong family patriarch.

A week after, with studies of how Lorenzo Ruiz might have looked and stood, the newly discovered Chinese sculptor intensely looked at the tall and strapping Ong and declared that he should be the model.

While flattered, Ong balked at the idea saying, "Though I want to be a saint like Lorenzo Ruiz, surely I'm unworthy to be a model for the saint's image!" but later came to a compromise with sculptor Po that he should get the saint's facial features as he would imagine him to be as a Chinoy (as they couldn't find an accurate image of the saint at that time, according to Ong) and model everything else on Ong.

When the time came to put up the shrine, another prominent Filipino-Chinese family came into the picture.

Asking around for someone to undertake the landscaping and construction of the shrine, Ong was referred to architect John "Toto" Que, whose family manages Iloilo Supermart, one of the few malls owned by Iloilo-based Chinese-Filipinos.

Only too happy to be of help, Que offered to do the project for free. The landscaping and installation in 1990 cost P15,000 with the image of San Lorenzo Ruiz tagged at P40,000.

While working on the project, Ong also discovered that the mother of architect Que happened to be an Ong, a relative.

Thus, three Chinoy families were able to put up a shrine for a Chinese-Filipino saint.

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2,900 used cars can't leave Subic

By Tonette Orejas
Inquirer Central Luzon

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—THE SUBIC BAY Metropolitan Authority has stopped importers from withdrawing at least 2,970 used passenger vehicles out of the Subic Bay Freeport.

SBMA Administrator Armand Arreza said he issued the order after the Supreme Court made a final ruling denying the motion of the Motor Vehicle Importers Association of Subic Bay Freeport Inc. (MVIASBFI) to sell the used cars outside the freeport.

The Office of the Solicitor General received a copy of the court's Oct. 30 resolution on Nov. 9. Arreza said his office received a copy on Nov. 16.

The court maintained its previous positions. On Feb. 20, 2006, it exempted the Subic Bay Freeport from the ban on the importation of used motor vehicles on the condition that it cannot sell or market them outside the freeport.

President Macapagal-Arroyo imposed the ban through a provision in Executive Order 156 that she issued on Dec. 12, 2002, as part of the guidelines of the government's motor vehicle development program.

The Feb. 26, 2006 decision, penned by Associate Justice Consuelo Ynares-Santiago, said "motor vehicles that come into the Philippine territory via the secured fenced-in former Subic Naval Base area may be stored, used or traded therein or exported out of the Philippine territory, but they cannot be imported into the Philippine territory outside of the secured fenced-in former Subic Naval Base area."

In an Aug. 22, 2006 resolution, the court denied the motions for clarification and reconsideration of the Southwing Heavy Industries Inc., United Auctioneers Inc., Microvan Inc., Subic Integrated Macro Ventures Corp. and the MVIASBFI to import cars into the Philippines through the freeport.

They said EO 418, which imposed an import duty of P500,000 on used motor vehicles except trucks, buses and special purpose vehicles, impliedly repealed EO 156.

"Their motions are without merit," the court said. "Notwithstanding the issuance of EO 418, used motor vehicles imported via the presently secured fenced-in former Subic Naval Base area cannot further be imported into the other parts of the Philippine territory," said the resolution penned by Associate Justice Renato Corona.

US bases can't hide on Mactan Island, says AFP officer

By Jhunnex Napallacan
Inquirer Visayas

CEBU CITY—A MILITARY OFFICIAL denied that the US has a secret military facility on Mactan Island.

"What can be made secret there in Mactan? It is a small island. It is a plain area and there's even no mountain," said Lt. Col. Jefferson Omandam, spokesperson of the AFP Central Command (Centcom).

Omandam was reacting to a report of the Bangkok-based international think tank, which alleged that the United States is maintaining secret bases in the Philippines, that came out in the INQUIRER on Thursday.

Omandam said the Armed Forces of the Philippines has two military camps in Mactan.

The one in Mactan Benito Ebuen Airbase houses the different units of the Philippine Air Force, such as the Tactical Operations Command, 2nd Tactical Operations Wing and 205th Helicopter Wing.

The second camp is the Naval Forces Central (Navforcen) in Canjulao, Lapu-Lapu City.

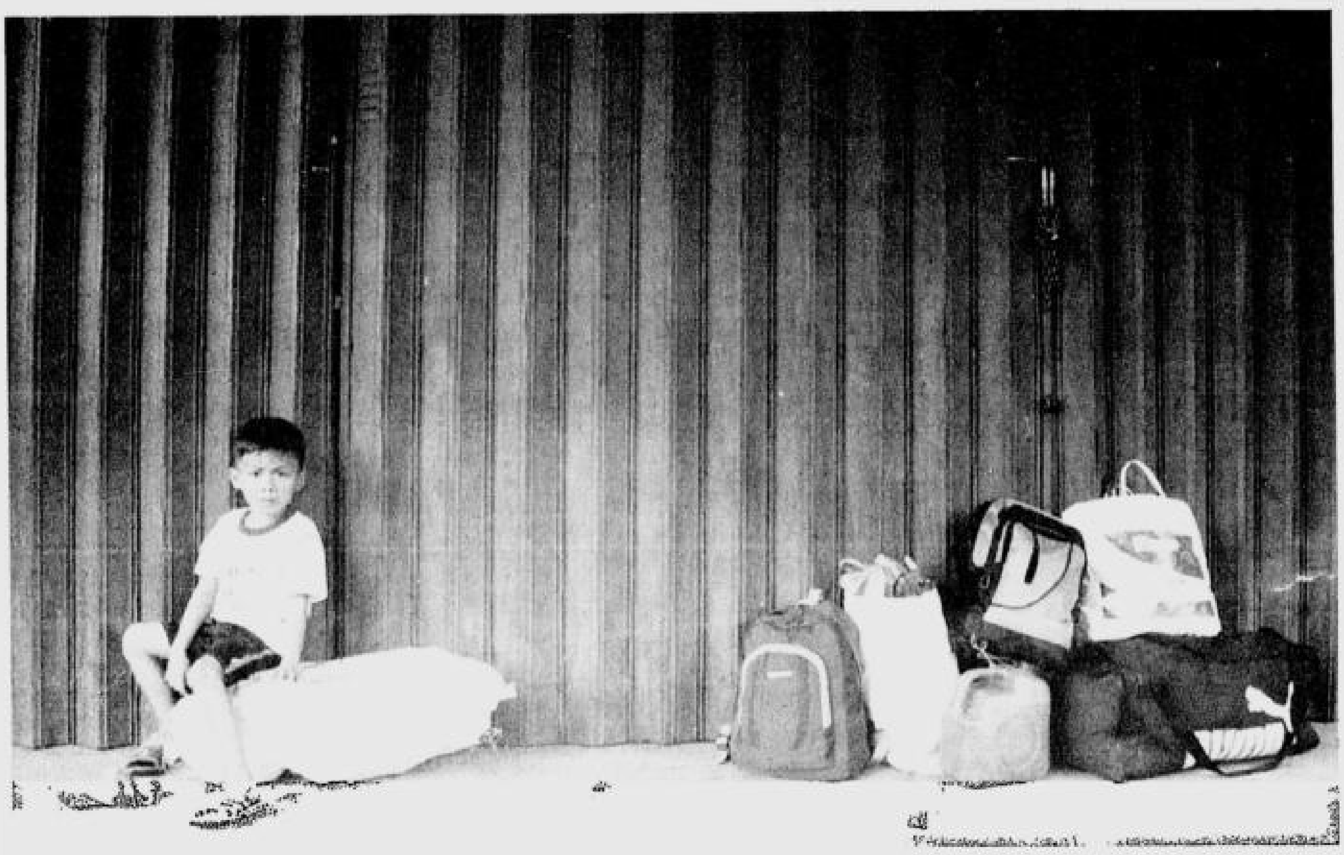
"As far as we are concerned, those are our camps. There's no one there with Caucasian noses," he said while laughing.

Omandam doubted the credibility of the group, which reported the alleged presence of secret bases.

It would have been better if the group provided evidence and not just based their reports on speculations, he said.

While there were instances in the past that US soldiers visited military installations in Mactan, Omandam explained, these visits were part of the RP-US Visiting Forces Agreement.

Because the Philippine military is the counterpart of the US military, the US soldiers usually met with Filipino soldiers in the military camps here, he added.



PLAY INTERRUPTED
NIÑO JESUS ORBETA/INQUIRER SOUTHERN LUZON
A boy awaits transportation that would bring him to an evacuation center set up at the Baligang Elementary School in Camalig, Albay, one of several towns that were ordered emptied of residents as Typhoon "Mina" approaches.

Mining execs seeking more mine engineers

BAGUIO CITY—DUE TO THE shortage of mining engineers in the country, mining officials have been visiting mining communities to encourage miners' children to take up mining engineering courses.

Roger Cosido, former director of the Philippine Mine Safety and Environment Association (PMSEA), said they have to do this because they need 970 mining engineers this year.

The shortage last year was 450, he said.

Exposed to mining

"The reason for this is that the mining industry is expanding. There are so many companies which are investing in the Philippines and we cannot meet their demands," he said in a forum here.

He said they are looking at children of miners and mining personnel because they have been exposed to the trade.

More mining engineers would be needed in the future because of the booming small-scale mining industry in the provinces, he said.

Cosido, who also chairs the board of examiners for mining engineers, said the country should produce 100 mining engineers every year.

Greener pastures

He lamented that the Philippines is losing mining engineers to mining companies in other countries such as South Africa, United States and Vietnam because of the high demand for them.

He said mining engineers are lured to accept job offers abroad because of high salaries.

In the Philippines, starting salaries for mining engineers would range from P8,000 to P10,000 while those in other countries would be from $7,000 to $8,000, he said.

Offers

Aside from engineers, the mining industry also noted a shortage of geologists.

Ernie Rodriguez, PMSEA president, said mining companies are trying to improve the salaries of mining engineers to encourage them to stay. "The companies are now reviewing the salary scale because there is now more competition," he said.

Only five schools are offering mining engineering courses: the University of the Philippines, Adamson University, Mapua Institute of Technology, Saint Louis University and Cebu Institute of Technology.

The SLU and Mapua have temporarily stopped offering the course but have expressed interest to offer it again in the future, Cosido said.

He said they are considering the establishment of institutes concentrated on mining engineering courses. "But we are trying to be cautious about this because we want to produce quality students who can compete globally," he said. *Desiree Caluza, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

Customs cops seize ₱34M in smuggled watches, phones

CALAMBA CITY—AGENTS OF the Bureau of Customs (BOC) and the police Criminal Investigation and Detection Group swooped down on a container terminal here on Thursday and confiscated smuggled goods, including tons of white sugar worth about P34 million.

Director Nestorio Gualberto, head of BOC's Enforcement and Security Service, and his group raided the compound of Asian Terminal Inc. in Barangay Mayapa at around 8 a.m.

The raiding team opened seven 40-foot container vans loaded with sugar, cellular phones and counterfeit wristwatches, bags and wallet, which were illegally transported from Singapore and China through the Port of Manila.

Gualberto said five of the container vans filled with sacks of white sugar were all consigned to Multi-free Trading.

He said the shipments were not covered by a permit and clearance to import sugar.

The other two container vans loaded with 2,875 pieces of Nokia and Sony Ericsson mobile handsets, fake Gucci bags, Ferragamo wallets and Rado watches, and 67,000 pieces of pornographic DVDs were supposedly owned by Golden Armour Enterprises.

Chief Insp. Isabelo Tibayan, operations chief of the Customs police, said they closely monitored the shipment after they received information about it a few weeks ago.

Tibayan said the two trading companies were previously suspected to be behind the smuggling activities at the port of Manila.

He said they would file criminal charges against owners of the trading firms and investigate how the contrabands were shipped out from the port. *Marlon Ramos, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

2 held in Kidapawan City explosion

KIDAPAWAN CITY—TWO SUSPECTS were arrested in connection with Thursday's blast at the baggage counter of KMCC Mall along Dayao Street here, which left one person dead and eight others injured.

Chief Insp. Leo Ajero, city police chief, yesterday said Hassan Mohaliad Sulaik, 19, a resident of Barangay Nuangan, and Alex Takukan Sanduyugan, 20, of Rahajmuda, Pikit, were arrested shortly after the bombing.

Senior Supt. Alexander Camba, North Cotabato police director, said Sulaik is related to a bomber arrested in Tacurong City in Sultan Kudarat several weeks ago.

"They were identified by witnesses as the last persons to deposit a baggage in the counter," Ajero said.

North Cotabato Gov. Jesus Sacdalan said he was informed that a baggage tag was recovered from the suspects.

"There was a baggage number recovered from them and their baggage was the only one missing at the mall's counter," he said.

Ajero said at least 10 kg of ammonium nitrate and a battery tester were recovered when policemen and soldiers raided the house of Sulaik in Nuangan yesterday.

THREATS won't interrupt normal business in Kidapawan City as shown by these men who tend to their shoe repair shop amid tension caused by bomb blasts in the city.
JEOFFREY MAITEM/INQUIRER MINDANAO

But nobody was around when the raiding team came in, he said.

Chief Supt. Felizaldo Serapio, Central Mindanao police director, said the motive of the explosion was extortion.

Serapio said a man identifying himself with the Alkobar Gang had called Mayor Rodolfo Gantuangco shortly before the bombing and had threatened to explode a bomb unless the city government shells out P500,000.

"Mayor Gantuangco ignored the call because it is not the government's policy to accede to extortion demands," Serapio said.

Gantuangco told the Catholic-run radio station dxND here that the man who phoned him admitted the group's involvement in previous bombings, including the Oct. 5 explosion that killed one person and wounded several others.

Gantuangco said after he rejected the demand, the KMCC explosion occurred.

Investigators said their initial findings pointed to a pipe bomb as the source of the explosion.

Killed instantly was Boyet Alfazar, 18, a baggage attendant of the KMCC Mall.

The injured victims were identified as Francisco Casia, 18, and Randy Singson, 18, Geralyn Luis, 16, Lovely Espejo, 42, Gina Ramirez, 37, couple Anniever Cahandig, 23 and Roderick Cahandig, 22, and a still unidentified victim.

Serapio said the bomb was remotely detonated.

Authorities also corrected an earlier report about a second bomb alleged recovered at the said mall after the blast.

Maj. Rodrigo Sosmeña, spokesperson of the Eastern Mindanao Command in Davao City, told the INQUIRER that the Alkobar Gang was the same group behind the series of bus explosions in Central Mindanao this year, that killed more than a dozen persons. *Rolando Pinsoy, Jeoffrey Maitem, Joselle dR. Badilla and Orlando Dinoy, Inquirer Mindanao*

Republic of the Philippines
SOCIAL SECURITY COMMISSION
Makati City

ANALENE B. SALAZAR,
Petitioner,
- versus -
IGNACIA TAGUD and VIRGINIA ORTEGA,
Respondents,
SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM,
Intervenor.
x - x

SSC Case No. 3-17770-07

SUMMONS

MS. VIRGINIA ORTEGA

Greetings:

You are hereby required to file within fifteen (15) days from the date of publication of this Summons with the Office of the Clerk of the Commission, 12th Floor, SSS (Makati) Building, 6782 Ayala Avenue corner Rufino Street, Makati City, your Answer to the Petition for benefits accruing from the death of SSS member Gerry B. Salazar.

You are further required to **serve a copy of your Answer**, to the following persons at their respective addresses:

(1) Atty. Kareen Tacorda
Counsel for the Petitioner
Public Attorney's Office
Makati District
G/F Gusali ng Katarungan
2228 F. Zobel Street, Makati City

(2) Ms. Ignacia Tagud
Respondent
Pasong, G. Hernandez
Bohol

(3) Atty. Bernardo Doñtas
Counsel for the Intervenor
SSS Iloilo Branch Office
Corner Rizal & Burgos Streets
Iloilo City

If you fail to answer within the time prescribed above, the Hearing Commissioner may, upon motion of the petitioner, or *motu proprio*, declare you in default and shall forthwith proceed to receive the petitioner's evidence *ex-parte* and thereafter recommend to the Commission either the granting or denial of the Petition as the evidence may warrant.

Makati City, Philippines, November 8, 2007.

SOCIAL SECURITY COMMISSION

(PDI – November 24, 2007)

PHILIPPINE COLLEGE OF SURGEONS

The Organization of Surgical Specialists in the Philippines
A Specialty Division of the Philippine Medical Association

VISION: A world-class organization of surgeons.
MISSION: To promote the highest quality surgical care.
CORE VALUES: Social Responsibility, Quality, Teamwork, Integrity
BREAKTHROUGH OBJECTIVES: Social Accountability and Responsibility

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- Joel U. Macalino, MD - Philippine Society for the Surgery of Trauma
- Rey Melchor F. Santos, MD - Philippine Association of Laparoscopic and Endoscopic Surgeons
- Enrique T. Ona, MD - Philippine Society of Transplant Surgeons
- Antonio N. Tanchuling Jr., MD - Philippine Hip and Knee Society
- Antonio B. Sison, MD - Philippine Spine Society
- Ramon L. de Vera, MD - Philippine Society of Ultrasound in Surgery
- Josefina R. Almonte, MD - Association of Women Surgeons in the Philippines

The Philippine College of Surgeons:
63rd Clinical Congress

The Philippine College of Surgeons (PCS) holds its 63rd Clinical Congress on December 2 to 5, 2007 at the EDSA Shangri-la Hotel. This year's congress presents "Evidence-Based Decision Making in Surgery" and is held in cooperation with the Society of Philippine Surgeons in America. The PCS has been in the front line of developing practice guidelines in the practice of surgery. This years Clinical Congress aims to clarify and elucidate on information presently available on the best clinical practices available, backed by scientific evidence. Local experts will be joined by 11 foreign speakers, 8 Filipino Surgeons from America and will elucidate on topics of cancer, surgical technique, post surgical therapy and other equally stimulating topics.

The PCS has continued to champion and support safe surgery in the country. Since its inception in 1936, the PCS has embarked on its mission in developing and promoting the highest level of surgery amongst its members based on the values of social responsibility, quality, teamwork and integrity.

The PCS currently has 11 regional chapters in the country and has 20 affiliated surgical societies. It oversees the training programs of the different surgical fields in the country. It provides for the continuing education and training of our country's surgeons through congresses, meetings, seminars, worskhops and the like. The organization publishes the Philippine Journal of Surgical Specialties which contains original research and analyses of surgical practices in the Philippines. Its various committees in Cancer, Trauma, Infection and the like produce different manuscripts aimed at standardizing surgical care in the country.

Members of the PCS are called Fellows. Trained and qualified surgeons must pass strict and stringent evaluation before they are accepted into the PCS Roster of Fellows. With the title of Fellow comes the assurance that the Filipino surgeon is competently trained, current with surgical theory and technique and dedicated to serve the Filipino patient.

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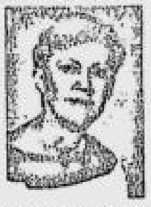
Murray F. Brennan Chair in Surgery
Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center
New York, New York



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Toronto, Canada

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Georgetown University Hospital
Washington, DC

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Yonsei Medical Minimally Invasive/Robotic Surgery Center
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College of Medicine
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Ibaraki Children's Hospital
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Hospital Director
National Cancer Center
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Pinnacle Health Hospitals
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, USA

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Wichita, Kansas, USA
Chairman, Cardiovascular Surgery
Cebu Doctors' University Hospital
Cebu City, Philippines

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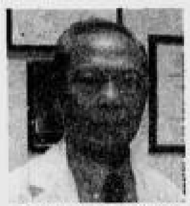
Assistant Clinical Professor of Surgery
Department of Surgery
St. Louis University School of Medicine
St. Louis, Missouri, USA



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Director of Vascular and Interventional Radiology
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Philippines

PHILIPPINE COLLEGE OF SURGEONS
63rd Annual Clinical Congress

Theme: Evidenced-Based Decision Making in Surgery
Date: December 2-5, 2007
Venue: EDSA Shangri-La Hotel Mandaluyong City
For inquiries: Please call 02-9274973-74; 9281083; & 9292359

Philippine Academy of Ophthalmology
Annual Meeting
Theme: The Eyes Have It!!! Medical Tourism and Beyond
Date: December 7-9, 2007
Venue: EDSA Shangri-La Hotel Mandaluyong City
For Inquiries: Please call 02-8135318; 8135324 & 8135331

Philippine Orthopedic Association
58th Annual Convention
Theme: Back and Basic: Orthopedic Trauma on Spine and Lower Extremity
Date: November 22-25, 2007
Venue: EDSA Shangri-La Hotel Mandaluyong City
For inquiries: Please call 02-6073926 or 6073940

Philippine Society of Otolaryngology - Head & Neck Surgery
51st Annual Convention
Theme: Head and Neck Oncology: Multidisciplinary Management in Targeting Cancer
Date: November 28 - December 1, 2007
Venue: Sofitel Philippine Plaza Pasay City
For inquiries: Please call 02-6338344 & 6332783

Philippine Urological Association
60th Annual Convention
Theme: Gold Standards in Urology
Date: November 28 - December 1, 2007
Venue: EDSA Shangri-La Hotel Mandaluyong City
For inquiries: Please call 02-4544439; 4260621; & 9256740

Philippine Association of Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgeons Inc.
14th Annual Convention and Postgraduate Course
Theme: New Frontiers in Thoracic, Cardiac and Vascular Surgery
Date: December 3-4, 2007
Venue: EDSA Shangri-La Hotel Mandaluyong City
For inquiries: Please call 02-9293626

Philippine Association of Plastic Reconstructive and Aesthetic Surgeons Symposium
Theme: EBCPG on Common Plastic Surgery
Date: December 3, 2007
Venue: EDSA Shangri-La Hotel Mandaluyong City
For Inquiries: Please call 02-7147465

Philippine Society of Colon and Rectal Surgeons
Postgraduate Course
Theme: Rectal Cancer
Date: December 3-4, 2007
Venue: EDSA Shangri-La Hotel Mandaluyong City
For Inquiries: Please call 02-4262520

Philippine Society of Pediatric Surgery
Symposium
Theme: The State of Pediatric Surgery in the Philippines
Date: December 3, 2007
Venue: EDSA Shangri-La Hotel Mandaluyong City
For Inquiries: Please call 02-5240742

Philippine Society for Vascular Surgery
Annual Postgraduate Course
Theme: Emerging Therapies in Vascular Surgery
Date: December 3, 2007
Venue: EDSA Shangri-La Hotel Mandaluyong City
For Inquiries: Please call 9243001 loc. 1002

Academy of Filipino Neurosurgeons Inc.
Annual Convention
Theme: Provincial Neurosurgery
Date: December 5, 2007
Venue: EDSA Shangri-La Hotel Mandaluyong City
For Inquiries: Please call 02-7259284

Philippine Society of General Surgeons
17th Postgraduate Course
Theme: Current Developments in General Surgery
Date: December 3-4, 2007
Venue: EDSA Shangri-La Hotel Mandaluyong City
For Inquiries: Please call 02-4356411 & 9288432

DR. GREGORIO T. SINGIAN MEMORIAL LECTURER

Antonio B. Sison, MD, FPCS, FPOA, FACS MPA

Orthopedic Surgeon

Dr. Antonio B. Sison is the Gregorio T. Singian Memorial Lecturer for the 63rd Annual Clinical Congress of the Philippine College of Surgeons slated on December 2, 2007. This year's distinguished lecturer comes with a pedigree from both the Philippine medical and law lineages. A member of the Sison clan that hails from Lingayen, Dr. Sison counts amongst his relatives Dr. Antonio G. Sison, former dean of the UP College of Medicine and Dr. Agerico Sison, internist and foremost educator. From his mother's side, he hajls from the renowned Bengzons of Pangasinan. Certainly, with a lineage of both Bengzon and Sison, our speaker was born to a path of importance.

Dr. Sison was educated at the UST College of Medicine, graduating in 1963. He had his residency in General Surgery at the Baguio General Hospital from 1965-1968. He honed his skills in Orthopedics at the National Orthopedic Hospital (presently the Philippine Orthopedic Center) from 1968 to 1972. He spent a year at the US Naval Hospital in Subic as an exchange resident in 1970. He took post residency Orthopedic fellowship at the The Accident Hospital and Birmingham University in England from 1972-73. Later in 1977, he was a USVA Assistance Program Awardee and had a stint at the VA Group of Hospitals in California, USA. In 1980, he was sent as the Western Pacific Orthopedic Association (currently Asia Pacific Orthopedic Association) - Zimmer Fellow to the Spine Center in Perth, Australia in 1980.

This year's lecturer has the distinction of having performed the first total knee replacement in the country in 1976. He was also a member of the team that performed the first total.hip replacement in the Philippines in 1973. He established the Orthopedic Residency Training Program at the Veterans Memorial Medical Center in 1985 and also at the University Hospital of Santo Tomas in 1990.

Dr. Sison became a fellow of the Philippine College of Surgeons in 1974 and was elected as a member of the Board of Regents in 1992. In 1998, he was one of the youngest fellows to ascend the presidency of the Philippine College of Surgeons. As president of the PCS, Dr. Sison he championed the 1) continuing education of PCS fellows; 2) review and reevaluation of the GS residency programs; 3) rewriting of the Relative Unit Values Manual; 4) monitoring of the HMO's; 5) creation of a voluntary blood donation program; 6) reassessment of the Fellows Assistance Program; 7) and the formation of a General Surgical Society of the Philippines.

Among Dr. Sison's academic and hospital appointments are: Associate Professor, UST College of Medicine; Chairman of the Department of Surgery at the Victor R. Potenciano Medical Center (1997 to 2001); Chairman of the Department of Orthopedics at the University Hospital of Santo Tomas (2006 to present); Medical Director of the Veterans Memorial Medical Center (2003 to present). He is also an active consultant at The Medical City, Capitol Medical Center, Victor R. Potenciano Medical Center, University of Santo Tomas Hospital and at the National Kidney and Transplant Institute.

Dr. Sison is a founding member of the Philippine Hip and Knee Society. He is a member of various orthopedic associations, local and foreign among which are Spine Section, Western Pacific Orthopedic Association, ASEAN Orthopedic Association, French Society of Orthopedic and Trauma Surgery, to name a few. Dr. Sison also has a rank of Lt. Colonel of the Medical Corps of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (Res).

Dr. Sison is married to Josefina Macaraeg. Their children Gerardo, Antonia and Evangelina are all doctors.

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PCS INDUCTEES 2007

Agra, Gino Paulino M.
UST, 1996
General Surgery
CSMC, 2003

Almoro, Robert Joseph B.
UERMCM, 1998
General Surgery
VMMC, 2004

Anayan, Segundo L. Jr.
WVSU, 1996
General Surgery
IDH-IMH, 2004

Arenajo, Camilo B.
MHAM-SWU, 1985
Orthopedic Surgery
POC, 1993

Asedillo, Emmanuel R.
UPCM, 1997
Orthopedic Surgery
UP-PGH, 2002

Bacon, Ismael Noe B. Jr.
MCU-FDTMFIM, 1998
General Surgery
TMC, 2004

Banaag, Amihan A.
UERMCM, 1995
General Surgery
EAMC, 2004

Barramoda, Romulo S. Jr.
WVSU, 1995
Transplant Surgery
NKTI, 2005

Bergonio, Greg Aniceto T.
MCU-FDTMFIM, 1994
Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery
PHC, 2003

Bergonio, Rodolfo P.
UPCM, 1997
Orthopedic Surgery
POC, 2004

Briones, Arvin G.
UPCM, 1997
General Surgery
UP-PGH, 2003

Cacas, Ronnie G.
UST, 1994
Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery
PHC, 2003

Casanova, Caesar E. Jr.
UERMCM, 1995
Transplant Surgery
UP-PGH, 2001

Catot, Dean Cyril Y.
WVSU, 1998
General Surgery
CLMMRH, 2004

Cayetano, Angel A. Jr.
UST, 1998
Orthopedic Surgery
JRRMMC, 2003

Chan, Calixto T. Jr.
DWU, 1989
Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery
PHC, 2003

Concepcion, Aniceto
FCM, 1990
General Surgery
DPJGM, 2001

Consolacion, Ariel I.
UST, 1997
General Surgery
DSLUMC, 2004

Constantino, Philip Carlo C.
UST, 1998
General Surgery
CSMC, 2004

Contreras, Enriquito B.
UST, 1996
General Surgery
JRRMMC, 2004

Cordero, Joseph A.
MSUCM, 1997
General Surgery
OM, 2004

David, Ma. Lourdes L.
SLU, 1983
Obstetrics and Gynecology
JBLMRH, 1991

Deveza, Alexander D.
DLSUCM, 1993
General Surgery
OMMC, 2003

Dimayuga, Leandro C. Jr.
UST, 1988
Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery
UP-PGH, 1996

Duran, Raymund I.
UERMCM, 1998
General Surgery
MMC, 2000

Ejercito, Carlos E. Jr.
UERMCM, 1997
General Surgery
MMC, 2003

Enriquez, Vivian P.
UST, 1994
General Surgery
OMMC, 2002

Español, Jose V.
FEU-NRMFIM, 1996
General Surgery
EAMC, 2004

Gerona, Carlos Urbano
GCM, 1982
Orthopedic Surgery
POC, 1990

Go, Miguel C.
CIM, 1998
General Surgery
POC, 2004

Go, Ronald O.
UST, 1998
General Surgery
CGHMC, 2004

Gustilo, Ceasar B
WVSUH, 1993
Orthopedic Surgery
WVSUH, 1998

Jaafar, Datu Bin Al Farabi L.
UST, 1994
General Surgery
AFPMC, 2003

Jabson, Almario G.
DSLUMC, 1999
Neurosurgery
UP-PGH, 2003

Kaw, Leoncio L. Jr.
UERMCM, 1994
General Surgery
UP-PGH, 2000

Kaw, Pierette T.
UERMCM, 1996
General Surgery
UP-PGH, 2003

Lat, Alexander Benedict D.L.
FEU-NRMFIM, 1994
Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery
USTH, 2003

Layon, Gilbert F.
FCM, 1995
General Surgery
CMC, 2004

Lee, Sherry L.
UERMCM, 1996
General Surgery
CSMC, 2004

Lim, Anderson H.
UST, 1993
Pediatric Surgery
USTH, 2001

Lim, Sharon Cating
UERMCM, 1991
Ophthalmology
UP-PGH, 1995

Lozano, Romeo S.
UST, 1988
ENT Surgery
UP-PGH, 1999

Lu, Leonardo C.
FEU-NRMFIM, 1996
Orthopedic Surgery
POC, 2004

Luis, Mary Ann Y.
MCU-FDTMF, 1992
Ophthalmology
MCU-FDTMF, 1997

Mallari, Raymund Noel C.
UST, 1997
General Surgery
SMDP, 2004

Marquez, Virgil G.
MNAMCM, 1983
General Surgery
CCMCSHHC, 1989

Matubang, Reginald G.
UST, 1998
General Surgery
TMC, 2004

Mayoga, Erwin Noel M.
WVSU, 1995
General Surgery
SPH, 2004

Melo, Randy C.
UST, 1990
General Surgery
CLMMRH, 2004

Muñoz, Suzette K.
UST, 1980
Obstetrics and Gynecology
USAFRMMC, 1985

Natino, Efren B.
FEU-NRMFIM, 1983
Obstetrics-Gynecology
JBLMRH, 1994

Naval, Roman Ricardo C.
UST, 1994
General Surgery
MDH, 2002

Nicolo, Joseph Dean L.
WVSU, 1992
General Surgery
WVMC, 1999

Nigos, Jesus M.
SLU, 1995
Neurosurgery
UP-PGH, 2003

Orocio, Mervyn Anthony R.
UST, 1995
General Surgery
MMC, 2001

Padlan, Michael C.
FEU-NRMFIM, 1997
General Surgery
MMC, 2004

Panganiban, Silvino Emmanuel C.
UERMCM, 1995
Orthopedic Surgery
POC, 2003

Pangilan, Pimbaya A. Jr.
CDUCM, 1998
General Surgery
CDUH, 2004

Pecache, Nelson S.
FEU-NRMFIM, 1989
Urology
AFPMC, 1997

Polido, Wilfredo T. Jr.
FEU-NRMFIM, 1996
General Surgery
FEU-NRMFMC, 2003

Puey, Edward Anthony G.
CDCM, 1994
ENT Surgery
USTH, 2001

Quilaton, Alexander S.
FEU-NRMFIM, 1994
Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery
JRRMMC, 2000

Rabe, Delfin G.
UST, 1981
Orthhopedic Surgery
POC, 1994

Raca, Julian Rizaldy C. Jr.
WVSU, 1998
General Surgery
CLMMRH, 1997

Ramos, Lourdes Josephine A.
UERMCM, 1994
Plastic Surgery
UERMMMC, 2002

Sabal, Eliseo B. Jr.
UERMCM, 1997
General Surgery
EAMC, 2004

Sajise, Izrael Percy U.
UPCM, 1997
General Surgery
EAMC, 2003

Santacera, Fraulein Rosario B.
IDCM, 1996
General Surgery
IDH-IMH, 2004

Santos, Maria Lourdes E.
UST, 1998
General Surgery
USTH, 2004

Sia, Kendrick G.
UPCM, 1997
General Surgery
MH, 2004

Tagorda, Joan S.
UERMCM, 1997
General Surgery
UERMMMC, 2003

Tengonciang, Angel H. Jr.
UERMCM, 1993
General Surgery
CMC, 2000

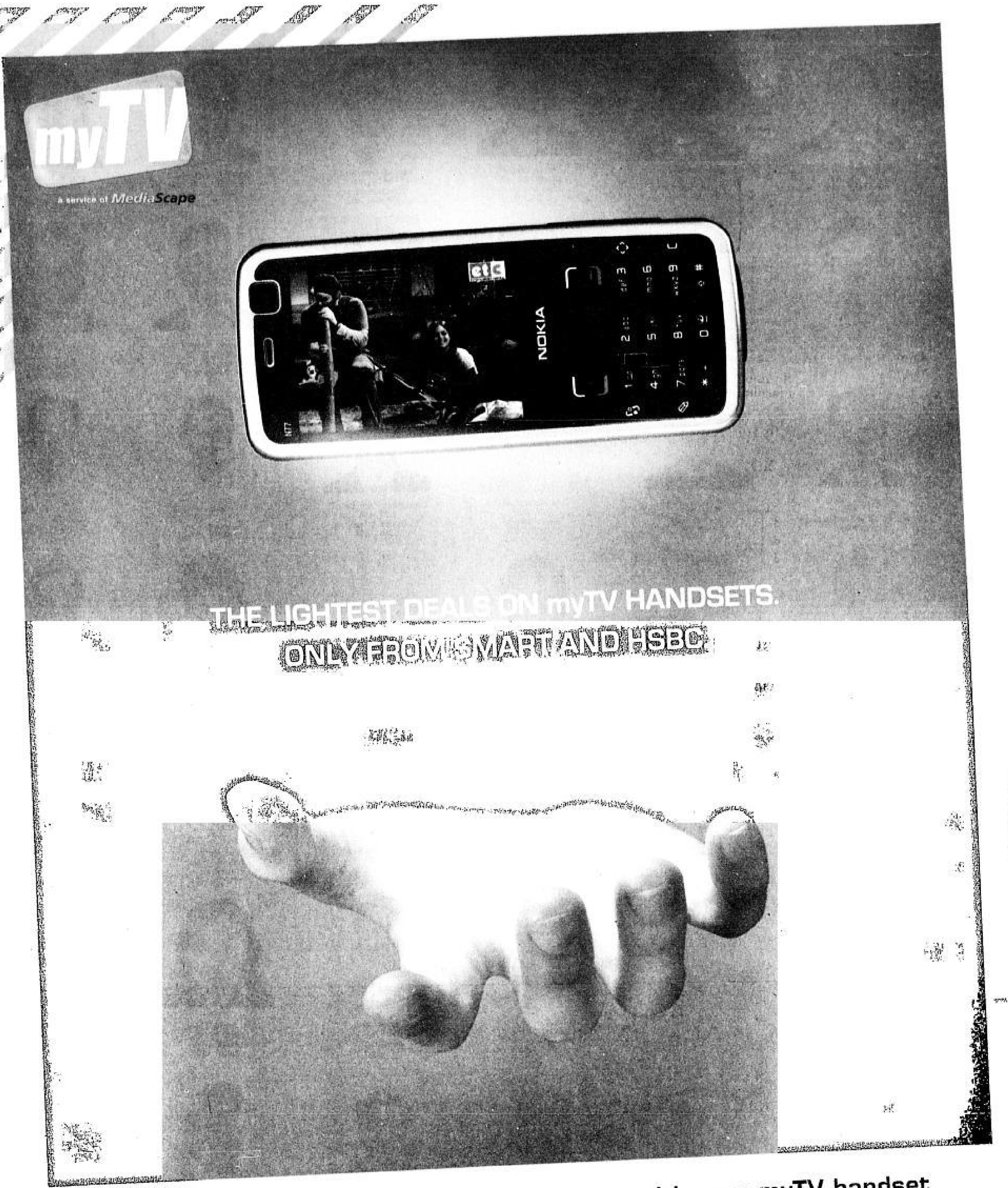
Torre, Andrea Joanne A.
WVSU, 1984
General Surgery
CLMMRH, 2005

Trayvilla, Lemuel C.
BCCM, 1993
General Surgery
BESTP, 2004

Trinidad, Noel G.
UERMCM, 1996
Orthopedic Surgery
POC, 2004

Tuazon, Edgar S.
UERMCM, 1992
Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery
PHC, 2003

Vergara, Nilo B.
CIM, 1991
Neurosurgery
UERMMMC, 2001



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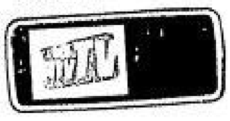

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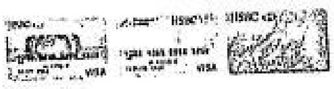

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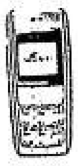

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DID YOU KNOW

THE NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation was the brainchild of former President Manuel L. Quezon and former Justice Secretary Jose Yulo. It started out as the Division of Investigation, which was created in 1936 by Commonwealth Act No. 181. Patterned after the US Federal Bureau of Investigation, the DI was initially composed of 45 agents plus doctors, chemists, fingerprint technicians, photographers, stenographers and clerks.

The DI was reorganized into the Bureau of Investigation in 1947, and was renamed the National Bureau of Investigation in the same year. Its main office is currently located in Ermita, Manila.

Cyril L. Bonabente, Inquirer Research

4 suspected hijackers of container van killed in shootout

By Allison W. Lopez

FOUR ALLEGED HIJACKERS of a container van were killed in a shootout with Manila police early morning yesterday in Tondo, Manila.

The suspects were identified as Milagroso Rivas, 71, of Kagitingan Street, Tondo; Floro Galabin, 48, of Parola; Roy Villocero, 32, vendor, also of Parola; and a still unidentified man about 35 years old.

The four were shot dead by members of the MPD District Mobile Police Unit, District Special Reaction Unit and Balut police station around 1:40 a.m. when they reportedly fired at the cops.

SPO2 Edgardo Ko of the MPD homicide division said the suspects sustained multiple gunshot wounds on the head and chest. The truck's windshield and driver's side window were shattered. Bullet holes were also found on the truck's front and left side.

About 10 meters away was a police mobile car with a bullet hole on the right passenger door.

The police report said the suspects took at gunpoint the 10-wheeler truck carrying artificial flour from driver Bienvenido Roxas at about 11:45 p.m. inside the Manila International Container Port terminal.

POLICE search container van carrying a load of artificial flour after a shootout between alleged hijackers and a mobile patrol team yesterday morning.
RAFFY LERMA

Roxas said he was freed along Road 10 in the Del Pan area. He immediately reported the incident to the police who set out to hunt the hijacked vehicle with plate No. TXG-469.

The police later found the truck parked at the Manila Harbor Center near Makro supermarket. The suspects reportedly fired at them, prompting them to shoot back.

Two 9 mm pistols and a hand grenade were recovered from the dead men. The truck's contents, however, were intact.

Ko said they were looking into the possibility that the suspects could be part of a hijacking syndicate targeting container vans.

Estafa raps vs 2 Makati hospital docs

Respondents participated in 'scam, pure and simple'–DOJ

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE HAS ORDERED the filing of large scale estafa charges against two Makati Medical Center doctors and two others for allegedly failing to return more than P28 million in investments in a corporation

Three other doctors named in the complaint filed by Jesus Rivera were, however, cleared by the DOJ.

Ordered charged with large scale estafa were cardiologist Emelyn Abundo-Rivera, pediatrician Shirley Pascual-Ong, Aurora Almojuela, Gilbert Ocampo and three persons identified only as John, Julie and Jenny Doe.

Emelyn is the president of the First Domain Lending Corp. (FDLC) where her father-in-law, Jesus, allegedly invested his money. Ong is reportedly one of the firm's backers while Almojuela is Emelyn's secretary.

Cleared were doctors Annabelle Aherrera, Sally Victoria Joaquino and Ernesto Santos. Santos was cleared in an earlier resolution affirmed by the DOJ.

Jesus alleged that he was promised huge profits in return for his investment that amounted to P28.69 million as of January 2007. His requests that his money be returned allegedly went unheeded.

The respondents, except for Ocampo, denied Jesus' allegations, saying they did not commit fraud and that the act attributed to them was only applicable to rural banks, cooperatives and farmers' associations.

State Prosecutor Diosdado Solidum Jr. said that apart from their denial, the respondents did not show any evidence to overturn the allegations against them.

Jesus, on the other hand, presented checks and promissory notes to show that he had been promised large profits from his money placements, Solidum added. The complainant also supported his contention that the respondents knew they would be unable to fulfill their promise because FDLC had no income.

Solidum also found no merit in the respondents' allegation that the case was only a failed business venture, saying it was a "scam, pure and simple" known as the Ponzi or pyramiding scheme.

"They (respondents) knowingly concealed the true nature of their scheme so that they could knowingly trick and deceive people into lending money to the said corporation," he said in his Nov. 14 resolution.

He added that instead of using the investors' money as capital, they used these to pay off the interest of other lenders.

Doctors Emelyn Abundo Rivera and Shirley Pascual-Ong were unavailable for comment. A Makati Medical Center telephone operator said Dr. Rivera was on indefinite leave, adding that Rivera's secretary Aurora Almojuela had not reported for work. Ong also could not be reached in her office.

With a report from DJ Yap

Classical jamming

By Allison W. Lopez

DECADES BEFORE POPULAR concert halls were built in Manila, music lovers flocked to St. Scholastica's College (SSC) to hear its students play the piano or violin in public for the first time.

"There were no formal concerts in the country yet in 1923, when Sr. Baptista Battig, founder of the school, organized students to play in a concert with an audience invited to witness the program. People really looked forward to this event," said Sr. Mary Placid Abejo, OSB, dean of SSC School of Music.

"It was really the main event in Manila. The critics wrote about the concert in glowing terms," she added.

In keeping with tradition and to celebrate 100 years of the School of Music, professional performers who graduated from the country's first formal music school will get together at 5 p.m. tomorrow for the annual Gala Concert at St. Cecilia's Hall.

Apart from gathering pianists and violinists educated in the Battig method, the concert will also be a means to raise funds for the school's outreach program Pro Musica, which provides lessons in voice, piano, violin and other instruments to music scholars in the provinces.

Since 1977, Pro Musica has produced talents from all over the country who have found work in local bands and orchestras, cruise ships and musical groups abroad.

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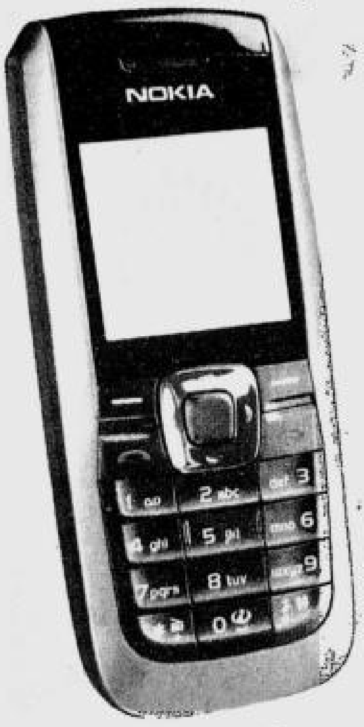
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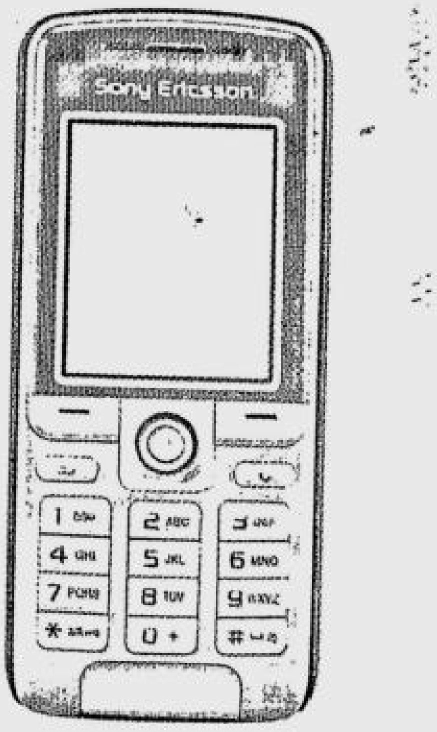
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Illegal drugs confiscated in raids

By Jeannette I. Andrade

POLICE ROUNDED UP SEVEN PERsons, including two Chinese and a Taiwanese, and seized millions of pesos worth of shabu and other items in three simultaneous raids of suspected illegal drugs laboratories in Quezon and Antipolo cities.

Also seized where chemicals used in the production of shabu and manufacturing equipment.

The suspects were allegedly chemists who manufactured the illegal drugs for distribution in Metro Manila with Quezon City as the transit point.

Arrested were Taiwanese Chen Tayun, Chinese nationals Lui Pang Ming and Yang Shu, Lily Gargarita Ramirez of Dumaguete City, Sandra Gargarita Uy of Marikina City, Wilfredo Uy of Marikina City and Mario Cruz of Bustos, Bulacan.

The raid was simultaneously conducted at around 11:45 a.m. by joint teams of the Quezon City Police District, the Philippine National Police Anti-Illegal Drugs Special Operations Task Force (PNP-AIDSOTF), and the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency in three different locations by virtue of search warrants issued by Quezon City Regional Trial Court Branch 103 Judge Jaime Salazar.

In Quezon City, the operations were conducted at Congressional Subdivision, in Barangay Tandang Sora and in Barangay Bungad, Project 7.

No suspects or evidence, however, were found at Kingsville Subdivision, Antipolo City. An AIDSOTF agent, who requested anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to media, said a container van was seen in the area and could have taken off with the illegal drugs and chemicals.

QCPD Director Sr. Supt. Magtanggol Gatdula said the syndicate to which the group allegedly belonged had different storage areas for finished products and chemicals used in the manufacture of illegal drugs.

Metro prepares for super 'Mina'

By Kristine L. Alave, Nancy Carvajal and Allison W. Lopez

LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN EASTERN Metro have ordered the removal of billboards and activated disaster response teams in preparation for Supertyphoon "Mina."

If it continued on its present course, Mina was expected to hit Metro Manila early today.

City officials of Mandaluyong, Pasig, and Marikina said they had taken measures to lessen the damage the typhoon might cause.

Mandaluyong City Mayor Benhur Abalos said City Hall workers had been dredging and cleaning ditches in flood-prone areas like the stretch of Edsa near Ortigas and Maysilo Circle.

In Marikina City, the local government told vendors along the Marikina River to move out since it did not want a repeat of the flooding in 2005 when thousands of goods were swept away when the river overflowed.

In Pasig City, Mayor Robert Eusebio said rescue and engineering teams were on standby.

Meanwhile, in Rizal province, the side of a mountain in Barangay Niyogan, Pililia collapsed yesterday, covering agricultural land. Gov. Casimiro Ynares III said there were no fatalities or injuries.

Valenzuela City Mayor Sherwin Gatchalian, on the other hand, said bags of groceries were ready and rescue teams were on standby while Navotas Mayor Toby Tiangco expressed confidence they had everything under control. "What we really do now is close monitoring," Tiangco said.

In Malabon City, Mayor Canuto Oreta said special rescue operations for areas that get flooded were being organized.

Caloocan City's environment and sanitation services head Al Santamaria, meanwhile, said that billboards had already been removed temporarily on orders of Mayor Enrico Echiverri.

Classical . . .

From page A23

go to charitable institutions," said Mary Ann Armovit, one of the pianists who will play in the one-hour concert. Unlike previous years, this concert will not feature solo performances to accommodate more participants, Abejo said.

Eleven pianists and four violinists, plus the SSC String Orchestra, Manila Symphony Orchestra, and Predis Children, will show their mastery of pieces like M. Wilberg's Fantasy on themes from Bizet's Carmen, Gershwin's Rhapsody in Blue and Liszt's Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2.

Local compositions like Ryan Cayabyab's version of the Ilocano folk tune "Pamulinawen" and Nonoy Gallardo's playful "Saranggola ni Pepe" will also be heard.

"It's our first time to be together in a concert," said pianist Zenas Lozada. "We made time in the last three weeks to practice."

"This group is supposed to be for those who are really performing artists," Rosemarie dela Paz, another pianist, added.

Apart from Armovit, Lozada and De la Paz, the other pianists are Mary Anne Espina, Anamaria de Guzman, Marianne Fajardo, Jane Banta, Carmen Padilla, Della Besa, Cristina Bichara and Greg Zuniega. Playing the violin, on the other hand, are Divina Juanita Salonga, Sara Maria Gonzales, Gina Medina and Denise Huang. Jeffrey Solares is the conductor.

Since pursuing a career as a concert pianist after graduation was more the exception than the norm, Armovit said the upcoming "classical jamming" was special as this would be the highlight of the concert.

Keeping alive the tradition of holding the annual concerts is all the more crucial these days when the arts is no longer as ardently pursued, said the music school dean.

"You have to keep the culture going in this country because times have changed. Not too many students are interested in studying music these days," Abejo said.

Fast-acting NBI agents

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

I WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation (NBI) for helping the "Isumbong mo kay Tulfo" program recover P112,000 that was duped from an overseas worker.

Rolando Ramirez, 54, of Tondo, Manila, who works in Italy as a family driver, came to the "Isumbong" office after he was shortchanged by a money-changing shop in Malate, Manila.

Ramirez went on leave from his work to attend to his sick wife who has been confined in a hospital. He had with him 4,300 euros which he changed to pesos at a money shop.

Ramirez was supposed to get P275,000 from the shop in exchange for his euros. When Ramirez got home, he found he was short of P112,000.

The OFW went back to the shop to try to get his money back, but he was driven away by burly men.

Ramirez was crying as he told me about what happened to him. The money was to be spent for his wife's medicines and hospital bills.

"Isumbong" employee Alin Ferrer called up her friend at the NBI, lawyer Sixto Burgos, and told him about the OFW's plight.

Burgos and his men then accompanied Ramirez to the shop and got back the P275,000.

If all law enforcement agents are like Burgos and his men who promptly act on complaints from ordinary folks, the government will regain the respect of the citizenry.

To Burgos and his men, may your tribe increase!

* * *

Why are money shops that gyp customers allowed to operate in the Ermita and Malate area?

Your guess is as good as mine. Could they be enjoying protection from some members of the Manila Police District?

That was not the first time "Isumbong" recovered money duped from customers of money shops in the Malate-Ermita area with the help of the NBI.

Hundreds of thousands of pesos have been recovered from these money shops through my public service program in scores of cases.

In all those instances, the NBI helped us in the recovery. When I sought the help of the Manila police in recovering money in these cases, they would tell me a search warrant was needed to raid the shops.

* * *

I am not being paid by Henry Sy, but his Banco de Oro is doing a great service to OFWs or their relatives who want to convert their foreign currencies into pesos.

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Changing foreign currency into pesos in any shop at the Malate-Ermita area is very risky, as you have learned from the OFW's bitter experience.

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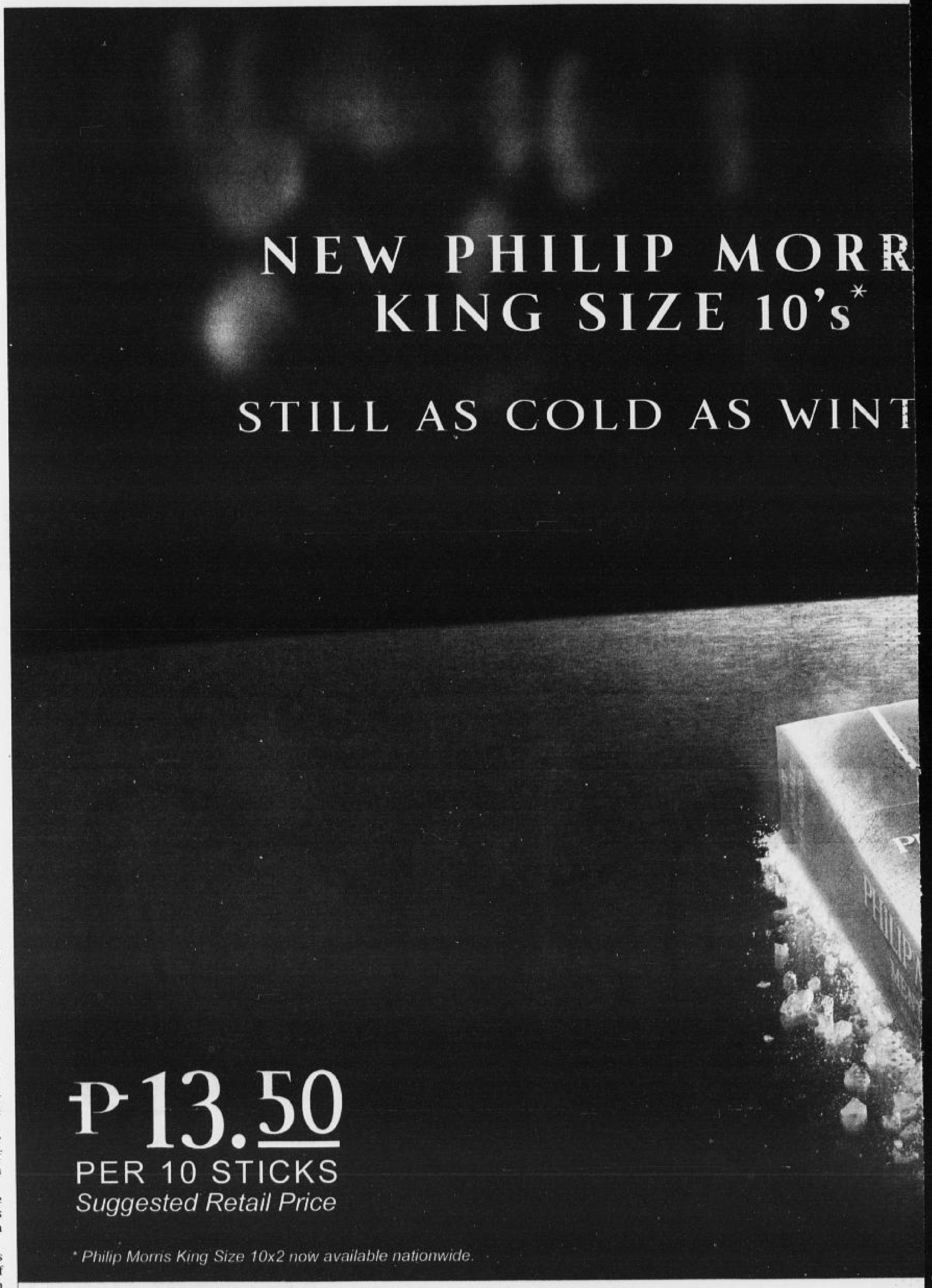

Government Warnin
is dangerous

Saudi women activists slam gang-rape ruling

MUSLIM women cross a street in the holy city of Mecca in Saudi Arabia. AFP

DUBAI—A RECENT SAUDI COURT ruling sentencing a woman to six months in jail and 200 lashes despite being gang-raped highlights the injustice faced by women in the ultra-conservative kingdom, women rights activists said.

"Sure, there is injustice against women in courts. It is a bitter situation that Saudi women have to endure," Saudi activist Wajiha al-Hweider said on Thursday.

"The kingdom is in an embarrassing position. King (Abdullah) should step in and stop this farce," Hweider said, adding that the judicial system, which is based on Islamic law, should be reformed.

Despite being raped by seven men who kidnapped her with a male companion at knife-point, the 19-year-old woman was sentenced in November 2006 to 90 lashes.

The judge sentenced her for being in a car with a man who was not her relative, a taboo in the ultraconservative desert kingdom.

But her story hit international headlines last week when her sentence was increased to six months in jail and 200 lashes after she spoke to the media.

Except for immediate family members, men and women cannot mix in Saudi Arabia, which applies a rigorous doctrine of Sunni Islam known as Wahhabism. Women must also cover themselves from head to toe in public and are banned from driving or traveling without permission from their male guardian.

The men were initially sentenced to one to five years in jail, but those terms were also increased last week to between two and nine years.

Their sentences fell short of the death penalty—which could be imposed in a rape conviction—due to the "lack of witnesses" and the "absence of confessions," the justice ministry said on Tuesday.

"The judge does not have a written law. It is a matter of luck. You are lucky if the judge is a moderate and fears God," said Hweider, an outspoken US-educated activist who leads a group of women demanding the right to drive.

Hatoon al-Fassi, a history lecturer at King Saud university in Riyadh and another women rights activist, agreed that women suffer from the lack of written laws, which subjects rulings to the discretion of judges.

"It is good that the case has taken an international dimension. It is shameful that such a case could have stayed unspoken of... This is a ruling that has treated the victim as a culprit," she said.

"Such logic is so distant from Islam. It is the result of a male-chauvinist reasoning," she charged.

Hweider highlighted the humiliation faced by women inside the courtroom, saying that a judge, who is always a clergyman, addresses only her male guardian.

"The woman does not have the right to represent herself in a court. She enters the court covered entirely in black. Some judges do not even allow her to speak," she said.

She pointed out cases of forgery where men took women to court to impersonate others only to make false claims. "It helped some men in stripping their sisters of inheritance, for example," she said.

A male guardian, who could be the woman's father, brother, husband, uncle, son, grandfather or grandson, literally controls her life.

"A woman is treated always as a minor and as a second-class citizen. She needs a male guardian," Fassi said.

She pointed out that she even needs her male guardian to obtain her identity card or passport and that women are not allowed to enter government departments. AFP

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WORLDBRIEFS

Tsunami rumor panics B'desh cyclone survivors

DHAKA—Thousands of people made homeless by Bangladesh's deadliest cyclone in 16 years scrambled for cover after rumors spread that a tsunami was about to hit the devastated coastline, officials and reporters said on Friday. "People squatting under the sky for a week after the cyclone killed thousands began running to and fro, looking for safe grounds on Thursday night to escape the unfounded tsunami," said a journalist in the coastal Barisal district. "No one knows who spread the false alarm, and why, that followed a rise in water levels at sea and rivers," journalist Aroop Talukder said. Weather officials said it was just a normal high tide, but it scared traumatized cyclone survivors many of whom are still not getting any relief a week after the Nov. 15 cyclone, due to horrendous logistical difficulties and the scale of devastation. *Reuters*

French transportation strike seems to near an end

PARIS—A crippling national transportation strike that has lasted nine days appeared to be sputtering to an end on Thursday as rail workers fighting to retain early retirement rights seemed willing to accept negotiations and voted throughout the country to return to work. More than 40 union assemblies across France voted to return to work, but more votes were being held. The state-owned rail operator SNCF hailed the early voting as a sign of a "dynamic" to return to work, and union officials talked about "a climate to suspend" the strike. Even if no one was willing to celebrate officially, and weary commuters continued to struggle with crowded trains and mobbed station platforms on Thursday, the strike was clearly losing steam. The proportion of rail workers absent on the SNCF, which runs the high-speed, regional and intercity train lines, fell to 14.5 percent on Thursday compared with 64 percent on the first day of the strike last week. *NYT*

Methamphetamine use rising in Central Europe

JESENIK, Czech Republic—The methamphetamine epidemic is not just a scourge of the American heartland. It has a powerful foothold here in the heart of Central Europe. Home meth labs are sprouting up all over the country to produce this cheap, potent drug using the pseudoephedrine found in common cold medications. In 2000, Czech police raided 19 cooking labs. By last year that number had grown to 416—in a country of just 10.2 million people. The appetite for methamphetamine in the Czech drug scene grew out of the strange ingenuity fostered among users once cut off by the Iron Curtain from imported highs. Now the consumption of this strongly addictive, often injected stimulant appears to be spreading from the Czech Republic to the rest of Europe. Whether it is carried by the flow of Czech workers migrating within the European Union or simply is gaining appeal as a half-price alternative to cocaine is unclear. But the number of countries in Europe reporting seizures of methamphetamine more than doubled between 2000 and 2005, to 25 from 11, according to the UN Office on Drugs and Crime. *NYT*

No takers for Saudi prince's sprawling $135M Aspen ranch

ASPEN, Colo.—Saudi Arabia's former ambassador to the United States has taken his sprawling estate near the ritzy Colorado ski resort town of Aspen off the market, his lawyer said. Prince Bandar bin Sultan had put the 36.4-hectare ranch and 5,202.5-square meter mansion up for sale in 2006 for $135 million. William Jordan III, an Aspen attorney who represents Bandar's local interests, says Bandar and his family have decided to keep the estate. No one had made an offer that was acceptable to the veteran Saudi diplomat, real estate broker Joshuah Saslove, who had listed the property, told the Aspen Daily News for its Thursday edition. *AP*

Bomb strikes Baghdad pet market, killing at least 13

BAGHDAD—A bomb exploded in a pet market in central Baghdad on Friday, killing at least 13 people and wounding dozens, Iraqi police said. The blast occurred just before 9 a.m. at the al-Ghazl market, and was the first attack against the popular weekly bazaar since a US-Iraqi security plan aimed at quelling spiraling violence began in mid-February, underscoring warnings by senior American commanders that extremists still pose a threat to Iraq's fragile security despite the downturn in violence. *AP*

Commonwealth suspends Pakistan

ISLAMABAD—PAKISTAN HIT BACK FRIDAY AT its suspension from the Commonwealth, saying it was "unreasonable and unjustified" and vowing the emergency-ruled country would not bend to outside pressures.

In a strongly-worded statement, the foreign ministry defended the state of emergency and said it would review its relations with the Commonwealth.

It came as Pakistan waits for President Pervez Musharraf to carry out his promise to resign as army chief after the purged Supreme Court swept away the final legal hurdle to his reelection.

Overnight, the Commonwealth said it was suspending Pakistan for the second time because of a "serious violation" of the group's core values.

Announcing the step, Commonwealth Secretary General Don McKinnon said the suspension was effective immediately and would continue "pending the return of the rule of law and democracy."

The foreign ministry said Islamabad "deeply regrets" the action which "does not take into account the objective conditions prevailing in Pakistan."

"Therefore, the CMAG decision is unreasonable and unjustified," it added, referring to the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group. "Pakistan will review its association and further cooperation with the organization."

It said the state of emergency imposed on Nov. 3 had been necessary to avert "a serious internal crisis and the situation was now "returning toward normalcy."

The progress, it warned, "will be determined by ground realities and legal requirements in Pakistan rather than unrealistic demands from outside."

Pakistan was first suspended from the 53-nation grouping of mainly British former colonies in 1999, when Musharraf seized power in a coup.

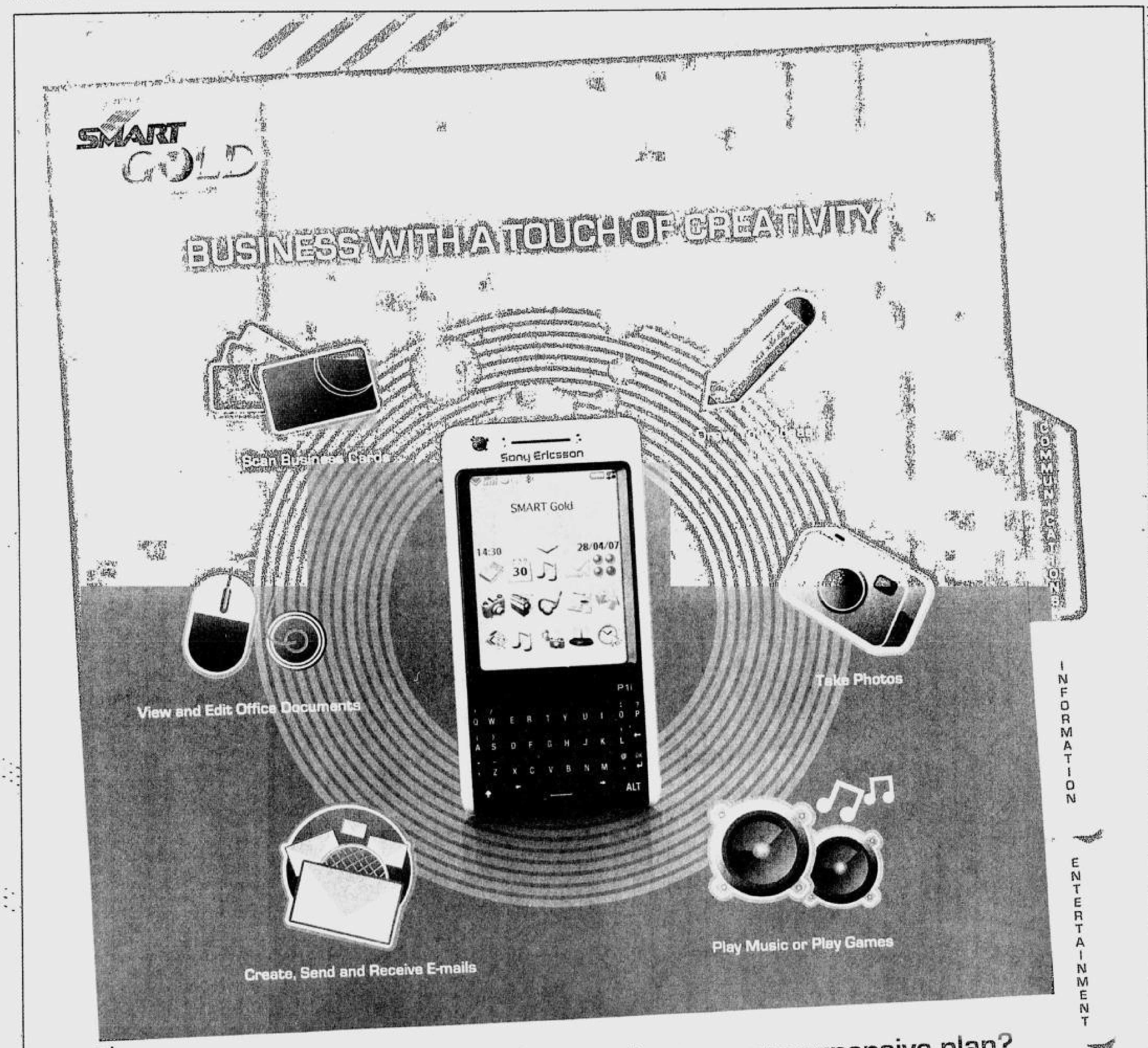
Its exclusion then lasted five years.

Meanwhile former Pakistani premier Nawaz Sharif, who was ousted in 1999 by Musharraf, will make a fresh attempt to return from exile in the next four or five days, a party spokesperson said.

Sharif was due later Friday to meet King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia, where he has been living in exile, to discuss plans for his return in time for general elections fixed for Jan. 8.

He had flown back to Pakistan on Sept. 10 but was swiftly deported to Jeddah by Pakistani authorities just four hours later.

Opposition leaders are split on whether to boycott the Jan. 8 vote and will confer on Saturday to see if they can agree on a common strategy. *AFP*



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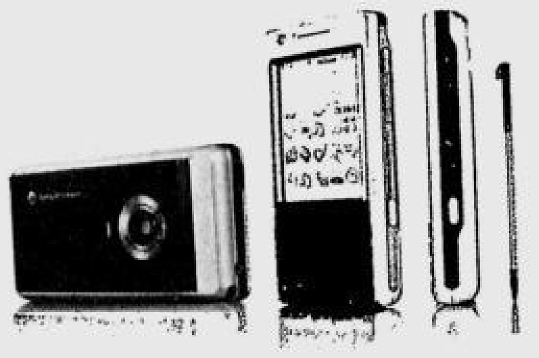

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WHAT'S INSIDE

Uzbek ace takes out Arevalo /A28

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Manotoc powers RP to As-Pac golf sweep /A29

Ranidel's 33 lifts Express over Pals

GAMES TODAY (*Araneta Coliseum*)
4 p.m.—Alaska vs Welcoat
6:20 p.m.—Coca-Cola vs Barangay Ginebra

By Musong R. Castillo

RANIDEL DE OCAMPO TIED HIS CAreer-high with 33 points last night, 13 of them coming in the fourth quarter as Air21 held off Talk 'N Text, 118-115, in the Smart-PBA Philippine Cup eliminations at the Araneta Coliseum.

De Ocampo, who also scored 33 points last season in a 127-110 victory over Talk 'N Text, capped his offensive brilliance with two free throws in the final 15 seconds that saved the Express from blowing a 11-point lead with 2:51 left.

And it pulled the Express to .500 at 4-4, while dealing the Phone Pals their fourth defeat at the close of their nine-game first round assignment.

"I think the key was that we were able to check their (Phone Pals') transition game," Air21 coach Bo Perasol said. "We know for a fact that their confidence comes from their transition game."

Anthony Washington's career game of 28 points was put to naught when Jimmy Alapag's three-point attempt with time winding down went just a tad too hard.

"I was pretty sure that Jimmy (Alapag) would make that shot," Perasol added. "Obviously, that miss was good for us."

Mac Cardona capped a strong fightback by the Phone Pals by nailing a three-pointer with 16.9 seconds left that trimmed the Air21 lead to 116-115. After that, Talk 'N Text sent De Ocampo to the line on a duty foul by Khalani Ferreria.

De Ocampo calmly made both charities and the Express played heads-up defense on the other end.

Meanwhile, National coach Chot Reyes accepted his nomination for the post of PBA commissioner, while Bert Manlapit excused himself, pegging at four the number of candidates being reviewed to replace Noli Eala.

The others in the list are lawyer Chito Salud, SBP executive director Patrick Gregorio, and telecommunications executive Lambert Ramos.

In other news, the three referees who worked the controversial Alaska vs Purefoods game on Wednesday will be suspended indefinitely in the aftermath of the protest filed by Aces coaching staff.

The Tender Juicy Giants won that game, 87-86 even with Kerby Raymundo committing a traveling violation in the game-winning play where he was able to pass to a wide open Rommel Adducul.

The scores:

First Game

AIR21 118—De Ocampo 33, Santos 23, Arboleda 23, Chia 12, Kramer 6, Intal 6, Cruz 5, Canaleta 4, Sotto 4, Se 2, Baluyot 0.

TALK 'N TEXT 115—Washington 28, Ritualo 24, Cardona 14, Allado 14, Alapag 12, Belano 11, Aljamal 5, Taulava 5, Ferreria 2, De Ocampo 0.

Quarters: 20-29, 50-49, 78-74, 118-115

RP ATHLETES flash the No. 1 sign with President Macapagal-Arroyo, who gave Team Philippines a pep talk for the coming Southeast Asian Games in Thailand. *Story on A28.*

LYN RILLON

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PBL: 'B' teams start last-ditch q'final bids today

STANDINGS	W	L
POOL A		
Hapee	7	0
Harbour	6	1
SMig Coffee	3	4
POOL B		
Mail & More	3	4
Toyota Bal.	3	4
Pharex	1	6
Bacchus	0	7

GAMES TODAY
(*The Arena, San Juan*)
12 noon—Bacchus vs Mail and More
2 p.m.—Hapee vs Harbour Centre
4 p.m.—Toyota Balintawak vs Pharex

THE PBL V-GO EXTREME ENERGY DRINK Cup plunges into its pool round, a unique phase in the tournament that gives gasping squads a last shot at advancing to the quarterfinals.

It also gives Hapee a chance to build on its unbeaten run in the hopes of gaining a psychological edge as the teams go deeper into the tournament.

Mail and More and winless Bacchus clash in the opener of a three-game bill at 12 noon at The Arena in San Juan today. Because of their record in the previous seven-game elimination round, both teams are clustered in Pool B, where most of the crucial action will be.

Pool B teams, carrying their elimination-round records, will fight in a round-robin affair. The squad with the best slate will claim the remaining twice-to-beat quarterfinal incentive, while the worst team will get the door.

Toyota Balintawak and Pharex, two other teams rounding up Pool B, will battle at 4 p.m.

"We're going for that (quarterfinal bonus); the players just have to put their hearts and minds to it," said Mail and More coach Allan Gregorio.

There is less pressure for teams that ended up in the upper half of the elimination-round bracket, those lumped in Pool A—Hapee, Harbour Centre and San Mig Coffee.

Hapee and Harbour Centre booked outright semifinal berths four days before the pool round.

But the Complete Protectors, though, plan to stretch their win run to eight games when they tackle the Batang Pier in the 2 p.m. game.

"We want to keep the number one spot," said coach Jun Noel after Hapee completed an round sweep behind celebrated Fil-American Gabe Norwood last Thursday.

Jasmine W. Payo

Uzbek ace takes out Arevalo

By Marc Anthony Reyes

SECOND SEED UZBEK VLADA EKSHIbarova wasn't in the mood to give Filipinos any more false hopes as she beat Czarina Mae Arevalo, 6-4, 6-3, yesterday and stormed into the semifinals of the Smart-PLDT ITF women's tennis tournament at the Manila Polo Club shell courts.

Working behind a mean forehand and relentless net forays, the statuesque Ekshibarova overwhelmed the last surviving Filipino bet in just over an hour to forge a clash with seventh-seed Zhang Li of Hong Kong.

"She (Arevalo) made simple mistakes," said Ekshibarova, the 5-foot-10 stunner who seemed disappointed over the lack of steady challenge from the hometown bet.

Arevalo committed a rash of errors, especially in the first game of the second set where she allowed Ekshibarova to pull even at 30-30 after making two unforced errors and then double-faulted at break point.

It was a far cry from her solid form last Thursday when she shocked the Japanese fifth seed, Ayumi Oka, 7-6 (0), 7-5.

In all, Arevalo lapsed into 10 errors in the second set, mainly on weak returns—on the few occasions she bothered to chase the ball—including one that sailed into the net and handed the Uzbek the victory.

Arevalo, who is training for the Southeast Asian Games in Thailand next month, admitted to playing badly. "I made too many unforced errors," she said.

The slender and spandex-clad Uzbek looked the more active between the protagonists, running after shots and making Arevalo play sluggishly from the baseline with excellent down-the-line passing shots.

Ekshibarova, said to be a pop sensation back home in Tashkent, sets out as the favorite today against the mainland-born Zhang, who ousted Russian Margarita Edinarova, 7-6, 6-1.

Last week's champ Nicole Riner of Switzerland also booked a seat in the Final four after beating Chinese Taipei's Chen Yi, 7-5, 6-0.

Riner, a member of her country's Fed Cup squad, will take on eighth-seeded Chang Kaichen, a 6-2, 6-2 victor over giant-killer Varanya Vijuksanaboon of Thailand. The Thai made it this far after a stunning upset of Russia's Anastasia Poltoratsakaya in second round, 7-5, 6-1.

VLADA Ekshibarova returns to Czarina-Mae Arevalo. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

GMA tells RP athletes: You are all winners

By Marc Anthony Reyes

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO FINALLY brought together the 300-plus national athletes who will compete in next month's Southeast Asian Games at the Heroes Hall in Malacañang, urging them to defend the overall crown but easing the pressure somewhat by already declaring them winners.

Ms. Arroyo's pep talk was brief and a bulk of her mingling with the athletes was spent on photo opportunities. And when she was through, she made it known that she had her eye cast on a bigger sporting prize.

The President actually took time out from her Typhoon Lando briefing to hob-nob with the athletes tasked to retain the overall crown in the SEA Games set Dec. 6-16 in Nakhon Ratchasima, Pattaya and Bangkok, Thailand.

"This is going to be very short," the President told the athletes in Filipino. " We have not forgotten about the honor you brought to the country after winning the overall title last SEA Games. "Hopefully, we can win this one again this year.

"But even if we don't get [the overall title], win or lose, we are very proud of you, world-class athletes."

Ms Arroyo lingered in the company of sports officials led by Philippine Sports Commission chair William "Butch" Ramirez, Philippine Olympic Committee president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco and Rep. Monico Puentevella.

There, she shot the all-important question: "So we're going to win the gold in Beijing, right?"

To which, Ramirez replied, "Yes, Ma'am."

"*Kahit isa lang talaga, kasi* (let's try to get at least one because) we've never gotten it anyway," she said of the elusive Olympic gold.

The athletes were taken to the Palace on three buses, and were treated to a relatively heavy snack menu made up of spaghetti, *lumpiang* shanghai, chicken wings and fried dumplings.

About the only hitch during the affair was when a handful of athletes were turned away from the Hall for failing to meet the proper dress code. The national basketball team members, for example, weren't allowed entry because they were wearing jeans.

PFF elections today; Cojuangco still in

BACOLOD CITY—FORMER REP. CARLOS COjuangco on Thursday took a swipe at the Philippine Football Federation but said he is not pulling out of the presidential race of the football body, which holds its elections today in Manila.

"I was nominated and it (my nomination) is still there," Cojuangco told the INQUIRER, refuting earlier reports that he has backed out of the elections.

But the Negros Occidental Football Association president admitted that he will not lead the PFF "if people continue to resist change."

Cojuangco's statement came in the wake of PFF president Johnny Romualdez's disclosure that Mariano Araneta has withdrawn his candidacy.

Mari Martinez, a former national player, and PFF publicist Ed Formoso are also running for the post.

Cedelf P. Tupas, Inquirer Visayas

Lady Stags prevail, gain finals

By Romina S. Austria

SAN SEBASTIAN COLLEGE played an inspired game right from the opening serve to beat University of Santo Tomas, 25-19, 23-25, 25-17, 25-21, and clinch a finals seat yesterday in the 2007 Shakey's V-League women's volleyball second conference semifinals at The Arena in San Juan.

It will be the Lady Stags' third consecutive finals appearance after losing to the La Salle Lady Archers in the 2006 season and to the Tigresses during the first conference.

For UST to make its second championship appearance this year, it must beat Ateneo tomorrow. Otherwise, the Lady Eagles will earn a knockout match against the Tigresses via the 3-of-4 incentive, which awards a playoff berth to the semifinalist that wins three out of its four matches.

"We really practiced hard for this match," said SSC coach Roger Gorayeb, whose team avenged their first-round defeat to UST.

Two smashes by Rysabelle Devanadera and Jinni Mondejar set the tone for the lopsided first set.

Thai Jaroensri Bualee also found the Tigresses' defense too porous, scoring one smash after another to spearhead the Lady Stags' 13-5 run that turned their 6-5 advantage into a more comfortable 19-10 lead.

UST came back from a 19-22 deficit in the second set to win.

In the third set, Devanadera and Latigay made mincemeat out of the Tigresses' defense, repeatedly scoring on spikes.

In the first game, Adamson repeated over La Salle, 25-19, 24-26, 25-23, 25-20, and will play in the third place series against either UST or Ateneo.

AUGUST DELA CRUZ

JACQUELINE Alarca and Stephanie Mercado block Adamson's Angela Benting.

Pera Padala batters cop Manila slo-pitch plum

PERA PADALA SCORED FOUR runs in the early innings to hack out a 6-2 victory against Meralco and bag its first Manila Slo-Pitch Softball League title recently.

Pera Padala's pitching rotation did enough to settle the outcome, allowing just two runs in the fourth inning and nothing else to crush Meralco's bid.

"Everybody contributed to this victory," said Pera Padala pitcher-coach Kiko Diaz. " We knew we had good chances of winning."

Earlier in the semifinals, Pera Padala shocked Cebuana Lhuillier, 18-5, with an 11-run effort in the third inning.

Meralco, on the other hand, failed to duplicate an earlier 11-8 victory over Pera Padala in their first meeting in the semifinals.

THE LION ROARS: Former world 9-ball champion Alex Pagulayan shows his trophy and the oversized replica of a check for $20,000 he won for ruling the recent Negros Oriental International 9-Ball Championship at the Dumaguete Convention Center in Dumaguete City. With "The Lion" (from left) are Puyat Sports events manager Ish Caparas, Negros Oriental first district Rep. Josie Limkaichiong and second district Rep. George Arnaiz. The country's biggest 9-ball tilt outside Metro Manila was jointly sponsored by Limkaichiong, trader Julio Sy Jr. and San Miguel. Corp.

Stockinger sweeps races; Marcelo clinches crown

CARMONA, CAVITE—MARLON STOCKinger of Birel swept the races, but it was Stefano Marcelo of San Miguel-Marcelo Racing who copped the overall Karter of the Year award recently in the 2007 Shell Helix Karting Super Series finals.

Stockinger ruled all three races and capture the Formula 125 Open Seniors crown at the Carmona Circuit Philippines track here.

He wrapped up the 20-lap race in 14 minutes and 35.937 seconds.

The 14-year-old Marcelo, settling for second spot with a time of 14:38.110, clinched the overall title with 609.5 points.

Despite using a less-powerful ROK engine, Marcelo posted the fastest lap time of 43.682 seconds. He also ruled the ROK Seniors class at the expense of Mike Casimiro.

Third was Oliver Aquino of Alessandra Racing while Bobby Domingo and Mike Casimiro ended up fourth and fifth, respectively.

Indy Villalon, the Birel team captain, wrapped up the Formula SL crown via a sweep of all three races. Stockinger and Daniel Cleak completed a 1-2-3 finish for Birel Motorsports.

STOCKINGER zooms to the finish.

Amassing 495 points, Villalon triumphed over JeT Racing's Vencer John Suba (474) and Oliver Aquino (416).

The other titles went to Bobby Domingo, 02Karting's Mike Casimiro, Francis Reyes and Mars de los Reyes.

Domingo claimed the Rotax Max 125 Seniors crown with 358 points, besting deposed champion Matteo Guidicelli and Daniel Cleak, while Casimiro pooled 596.5 to bag the ROK Seniors plum over teammate Ken Monzones.

The Rotax Max Novice title went to Reyes with 430 while the Rotax Max Veterans crown went to De los Reyes. *Steve Silva, Contributor*

SPORTSWATCH

UGBA elims at SJC today

MORE THAN 100 MATCHES SPICE UP today's elimination round of the UGBA Heritage Cup National 9-Stag Derby 2007 sponsored by Sagupaan Complexor 3000 at the San Juan Coliseum.

A total of 503 entries have vied in the elimination rounds of the P10-million derby, according to Rene Diaz, president of United Gamecock Breeders Association.

SJC will also be the venue of two elimination rounds on Nov. 26 and 28.

'Bakbakan' at Makati today

TOPNOTCH BREEDERS FROM THE provinces clash today in the championship round of of the NFGB National *Bakbakan* 10-Stag Derby at the Makati Coliseum.

Seeing action in today's 100-fight 4-stag finals are participants with 5 points.

Ricoy Palmares Jr., president of National Federation of Gamefowl Breeders, said the highest scorers so far are Mayor Nene Aguilar, Cano Villasin and Ruel Ricafort, each with 8.5 points each.

NSA heads Antipolo field

MORE THAN 80 MATCHES ARE ON TAP in the Tagapo 4-Stag Clean-Up Derby starting at 3 p.m. today at the Blue Mountain Cockpit in Cogeo, Antipolo City.

Heading the field in the event, hosted by lawyer Joey Mendoza, is the NSA-KC entry of partners Bingbing Antonio and Ogie Tyrone. They will be fielding again their famed Ormoc Gold crosses. Also seeing action is LGBA Breeder of the Year Dr Boy Tuazon.

Manotoc powers RP to As-Pac golf sweep

By Musong R. Castillo

TOMMY MANOTOC, IN A PERFORMANCE HE DEscribed as "great for an old man," matched par 72 on a brutal day at the Malarayat layout in Lipa City yesterday to win the individual title running away and lead the Philippines to the Asia-Pacific Senior Amateur team crown.

The 58-year-old Manotoc, a member of several Putra Cup champion teams, hit all but two greens despite the blustery winds that bedeviled the field. He finished with a 54-hole 219 total for a six-stroke victory over Australian Brian Sams, who also assembled a 72.

But more than winning the individual title for the second time in four years, Manotoc spearheaded a fiery finish that gave the Philippines a sweep for the second time in three years.

"Considering the conditions, it was a great round for an old man," Manotoc, who had three birdies against the same number of bogeys, said in jest. "It was good to be able to play the way I did and help the country win. That's most gratifying."

Manotoc, who manages the Calatagan golf complex in Batangas, three-putted twice and failed to save par in one of the two greens he missed.

Iggy Clavecilla, the individual winner in the RP sweep in China two years ago, and Seve Roxas-Chua tallied 77s, and either one counted in the Philippines' 149 total for the day and 445 overall for a four-stroke win over Australia.

South Korea (155-450), New Zealand 1 (160-463) and New Zealand 2 (152-464) followed in that order.

"GREAT FOR AN OLD MAN": Man of the hour Manotoc

New Zealand's Bill Bell, who started the day tied with Manotoc, double-bogeyed No. 17 on the way to an 80 and wound up in joint sixth at 229 with Park Young-eung Korea, who closed out with a 79.

Tony Olives, Lino Magpantay and Katy Katigbak shot a 162 for a 472 and likewise ran away with the international team title over Taiwan (169-501) in the tournament sponsored by Philippine Airlines, Pagcor, Department of Tourism and Hanjin Heavy Industries.

Other winners were Katigbak, overall net champion-215; Clavecilla (Group A, 55-59, overall gross champion); Rodney Baltrop (Group B, 60-64); Jun Kee Lee (Group C, 65-69); Lee Eun Sup (Group D, 70-over).

Miñoza 7 adrift in World Open

KOSHI, JAPAN—FILIPINO ACE FRANKIE Miñoza shot a two-under-par 70 Friday and easily made it to the money rounds of the $1.3 million Casio World Open at the Kochi Kuroshio Country Club.

The 48-year-old Miñoza, a seven-time winner in the Japan Tour, improved on his opening 73 for a share of 15th to 22nd places, seven strokes off solo leader IS Chang of South Korea. Chang tallied a 67 for 136.

Meanwhile, Mars Pucay fired a three-under-par 69 Friday to vault into contention halfway through the Vietnam Masters at the Hanoi Phoenix Golf Resort in Vietnam.

Pucay, winner of the Asean Tour leg last month at Mt. Malarayat, tallied a 141 and trailed Thai pacesetters Chawalit Plaphol (67) and Boonchu Ruangkit (67) by three shots.

Artemio Murakami shot a 70 for a 143 aggregate, avoiding the fate of Angelo Que (77-147), Jerome Delariarte (74-148) and Marlon Dizon (75-149) who all missed the cut.

Sadorra nips Chinese GM, shares lead

Standings after two rounds:

2 points—J. Sadorra (RP), O. Barbosa (RP), C. Li China), W. Zhou (China), L. Yu (China), Y. Wang (China), 1.5 – Z. Zhong (Singapore), N. A. Dung (Vietnam), E. Torre (RP), W. So (RP), M. Paragua (RP), J. Gonzales (RP), R. Bancod (RP), R. Bitoon (RP), R. Nolte (RP), H. Taufik (Indonesia), R. Li (China), Q. Hang (China), B. Nadera (RP), R. Salcedo (RP), D. Ballecer (RP), R. Suelo (RP), R. Andador (RP), V. Lluch (RP)

FILIPINO INTERNATIONAL MASTER JULIO Catalino Sadorra toppled top seed Grandmaster Ni Hua of China yesterday, highlighting the rash of upsets in the second round of the 2007 President Gloria Macapgal Arroyo Cup international chess championship at the Duty Free Fiesta Mall in Parañaque City.

The Singapore-based Sadorra forced Ni to surrender after 39 moves of the Slav to share the early lead with four Chinese and countryman Oliver Barbosa with perfect scores of two points in the nine-round, seven-day $40,000 tournament.

Chinese players who got the better of their Filipino counterparts were third seed Li Chao, who outclassed National Master Hamed Nouri; Weiqi Zhou, who humbled IM Chito Garma; and Lie Yu, who outwitted IM Ronald Dableo.

Another Chinese campaigner, WGM Wang Yu trounced IM Tirto of Indonesia to join the lead pack. Barbosa bested Fide Master Fernie Donguines in an all-Filipino showdown.

Eighteen players, led by GMs Eugene Torre and Mark Paragua and IMs Wesley So, Jayson Gonzales and Ronald Bancod settled for draws and were lodged at 1.5 points.

Torre drew with NM Rolando Nolte, as did the 14-year-old So against IM Richard Bitoon, Paragua against Bancod and Gonzales against Rolando Andador.

The tale of woe belonged to GM Rogelio Antonio Jr. Antonio forfeited his match against unheralded Raymund Salcedo after his cellphone suddenly rang in the middle of the match in violation of FIDE rules.

Bata, Warren aim for third straight wins

FILIPINO CUE MASTERS EFREN "BATA" Reyes, Lee Vann Corteza and Warren Kiamco try to keep their clean slates when they go up against separate foes in the 40th All Japan Championships at the in Amagasaki-shi, Hyogo, Japan, on Friday.

Reyes, Corteza and Kiamco hurdled their first two matches to boost their bids for the 2,000,000 yen (about P800,000) champion's purse in the double-elimination event.

The 53-year-old Reyes takes on Japan's K. Hirota while Corteza, the all-Japan titlist, battles 2005 World Pool Championship runner-up Kuo Po-cheng of Taiwan. Kiamco will tangle with veteran Yang Ching-shun of Taiwan.

Two other Filipinos, Francisco "Django" Bustamante and Ramil Gallego, dropped their second-round assignments and fell into must-win situations against Japan's Y. Akagariyama and New Zealand's Ceri Worts, respectively.

Unable to flash the form that carried him past Japanese T. Noda, Bustamante bowed to Y. Hisada, 3-9, and landed in the losers' bracket with Gallego, who yielded to Taiwan's Hung Hsiang-wang after conquering Hong Kong's Au Chi-wai.

Former World Pool champion Thorsten Hohmann of Germany also tumbled to the losers' bracket after getting waylaid by K. Koga of Japan.

Marlon Bernardino, Contributor

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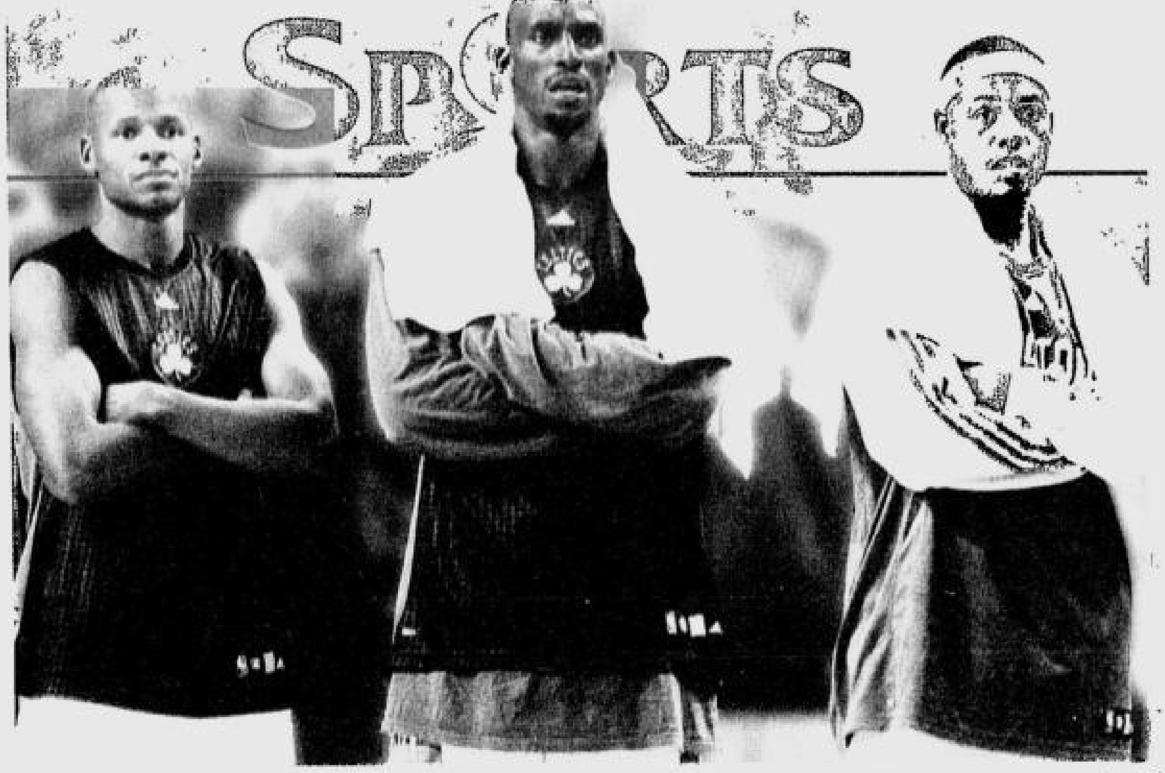

CAN THE Big Three of the Boston Celtics—(from left) Ray Allen, Kevin Garnett and Paul Pierce—renew a meaningful rivalry with the Los Angeles Lakers and their Big One, Kobe Bryant? REUTERS

Can Celtics, Lakers revive old rivalry?

BOSTON—KEVIN GARNETT ALMOST WAS a Laker.

Kobe Bryant? Well, for now he's still with the Lakers.

The Minnesota Timberwolves dealt an unhappy Garnett to the Boston Celtics instead of the Lakers last summer. An unhappy Bryant asked to be traded during an interview last May, and has not yet rescinded his demand.

Not surprisingly, Garnett has joined Ray Allen and Paul Pierce to transform the Celtics from also-ran to league powerhouse with a 9-1 record.

Remarkably, Bryant now appears grounded with the Lakers after an offseason of controversy and uncertainty, helping them to a 7-4 mark.

All of which provides an intriguing backdrop for what figures to be as compelling a November matchup as anyone is likely to find in the NBA.

When Bryant scored 43 points in his last visit to Boston as the Lakers beat the Celtics on Jan. 31, fans chanted, "MVP, MVP," just as they do at Staples Center.

That's unlikely to happen again. Celtic pride has been restored thanks to Garnett, Allen and Pierce.

Whether an ancient rivalry can be rekindled remains to be seen, however. It's been two decades since the teams played a meaningful game. It's also been that long since the Celtics were championship material. Meanwhile, the Lakers won three consecutive NBA titles to start this decade.

"If it gets back to that, it means we're playing at a championship level, so hell yes I would (like to see the Lakers-Celtics rivalry rekindled)," Bryant said.

The Lakers and Celtics defined the NBA in the 1980s. The teams played three times for the league title in the decade, with the Lakers winning twice. The Lakers' 1985 victory ended Boston's 7-0 streak against them in the Finals.

With Magic Johnson, James Worthy and Kareem Abdul-Jabbar in purple and gold, and McHale, Larry Bird and Robert Parrish in green and white, the teams couldn't have been more different.

Those days, you were either a Lakers fan or a Celtics fan. Bryant said he was a Celtics-hater while growing up in Philadelphia.

"I hated those bastards," he said. "I couldn't stand them. Are you kidding me? Bird, McHale and (Danny) Ainge? Ainge was like a little pest. I couldn't stand the guy." *New York Times News Service*

BRYANT: Bastards

GAME TODAY
(Basketball TV)
9 a.m.—LA Lakers vs. Phoenix
(replay @ 9 p.m.)

Vargas to pig out after Mayorga bout

LOS ANGELES—FINALLY, FERNANDO VARGAS CAN FORGET ABOUT watching his waistline, if he so desires.

"I'm a food connoisseur. I love to eat," he said with a smile.

Beginning this weekend, the 29-year-old Vargas can eat to his heart's content. He plans to retire from boxing after facing Ricardo Mayorga in a 12-round super middleweight bout Friday night at Staples Center.

"Believe me, it will be my last one. I'm looking forward to it," Vargas said earlier this week following a news conference that featured a lot of preening and screaming between the two fighters, who exchanged punches July 11 during their first news conference. *AP*

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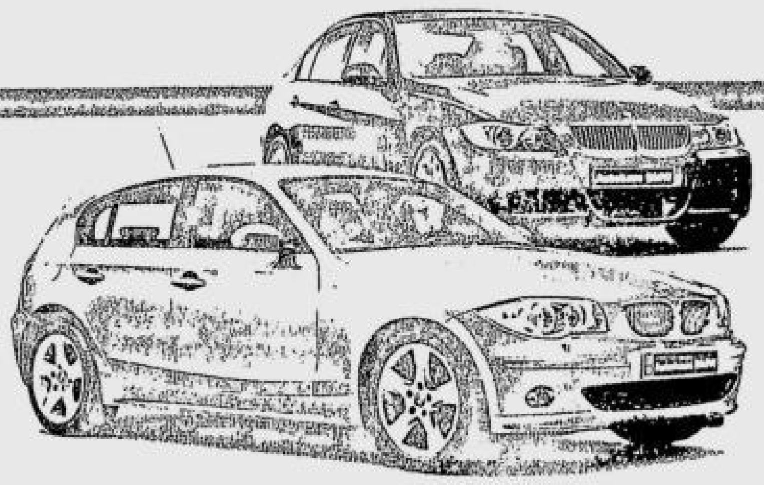

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BMW 320i Executive	Arctic	2006	2,000,000.00
BMW 320i Executive	Titanium Silver	2006	2,000,000.00
BMW 320i Executive	Titanium Silver	2006	2,000,000.00
BMW 320i LE	Black Sapphire	2006	2,250,000.00
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Republic of the Philippines
CITY OF SANTA ROSA
Province of Laguna

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

1. The *City Government of Santa Rosa through the General Fund of 2007* intends to apply the sum of ***THREE MILLION THIRTY-NINE THOUSAND SIX HUNDRED PESOS (Php 3,039,600.00)*** being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for ***Purchasing and Delivering of Rice for City Government Employees at City of Sta. Rosa, Laguna. Project Reference Number: G-2007-765.*** Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening. The schedule of BAC activities is as follows:

BAC ACTIVITIES	DATE	VENUE
1. Issuance of Bid Documents upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Php3,039.60	Nov. 22-Dec. 6, 2007 8:00 AM-5:00 PM	BAC Office Santa Rosa City Hall J.P. Rizal Blvd., Market Area City of Santa Rosa, Laguna
2. Pre-bid Conference	December 3, 2007 10:00 AM	
3. Receipt and Opening of Bids	December 17, 2007 10:00 AM	

2. All Bids for the above-mentioned project must be accompanied by a Bid security in the form and in the amount as stated in the Bid Data Sheet (BDS) or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency. Late Bids shall not be accepted.
3. Request for clarifications must be submitted at least ten (10) calendar days before the scheduled opening of bids as tabulated above. For further inquiry, please call telephone number (049) 534-1192.
4. The *City Government of Santa Rosa* reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

(Sgd.) ROMULO M. CATINDIG
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI-Nov. 24, 2007)

IN THIS ISSUE

- **Gov't collects P8.87B** in GOCC dividends /B3
- **Manufacturing output** down by 1% in Sept. /B4

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Businesses more upbeat in Q4

Good harvests, stronger inflows feed positive sentiment

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo prepares to ring the bell to signal the opening of yesterday's trading at the Philippine Stock Exchange. The President witnessed the listing of the additional shares of TKC Steel Corp. *(story on page B2)*, which will operate a billet-making plant in the country. With her is Ben Tiu, chair of TKC Steel. AP

By Doris C. Dumlao

BUSINESSES HAVE TURNED more upbeat in the fourth quarter given the country's much improved economic fundamentals as well as expectations of stronger consumer demand and overseas remittances with the onset of the Christmas season, according to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' latest quarterly survey.

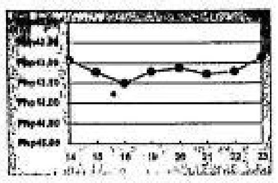
The local business sector's confidence index for the September-to-December period rose to 48 percent from the 40.9 percent index of the third quarter survey. This meant that, out of every 10 respondents, those optimistic (7.5) outnumbered the pessimists (2.5) by about five.

Other factors that fueled the business sector's optimism included the good harvest season, increase in foreign investments and en-

BUSINESSES/ B4

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



NOVEMBER

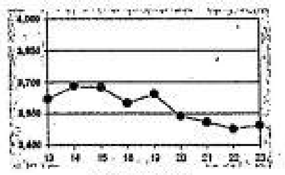
PESO-DOLLAR RATE

P 42.85 = $ 1

As of 5 p.m., Nov. 22, 2007

STOCK MARKET

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



NOVEMBER

Shares close 0.5% higher

SHARE PRICES YESTERDAY CLOSED 0.5 percent higher in a technical rebound led by Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., snapping a three-day decline, dealers said.

They said technical problems had forced the stock exchange to revert to manual computing during the session, creating some problems with traders unable to see

SHARES/ B4

DOE tightens monitoring of oil firms

By Abigail L. Ho

THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY WILL BE tapping the services of an independent accountant to look over the books of local oil firms to ensure that they are not earning too much at the expense of motorists.

During a multi-sectoral meeting at the DOE yesterday, Energy Secretary Angelo Reyes said he would approach a third-party accountant that would be willing to provide its services to the government for free.

"We'll ask them to donate their services as part of their corporate social responsibility," Reyes said. "Oil companies regularly submit reports to the DOE and the (Securities and Exchange Commission) anyway. We will submit those information, plus whatever additional information we can gather, to an independent, reputable accounting firm."

While tightening its watch over the oil firms, he said, the DOE would continue to work with all stakeholders to cushion the impact of escalating world oil prices on local consumers.

Oil refiners Petron Corp. and Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. had committed to increase the number of stations offering diesel discounts to public utility vehicles. Each firm will double the number of stations from 150 to 300.

"Those 300 stations will be nationwide, and not just in Metro Manila. We'll also look at providing gasoline discounts in some ar-

DOE TIGHTENS/ B4

Only DMCI passed screening for ₱5.9-B LRT expansion bid

By Riza T. Olchondra

ONLY ONE OUT OF 20 BIDDERS passed the Light Rail Transit Authority's eligibility screening for the P5.9-billion LRT1 north extension project that would close the LRT and MRT loop.

"Finally, after three tries," said Jesus Cammayo Jr., DMCI-CM Pancho-First Balfour joint venture engineering supervisor.

"LRTA was more strict than other agencies," he told reporters after three days of pre-qualification sessions at the LRTA's Santolan depot. "But we appreciate the transparency."

According to LRTA Deputy Administrator Cesar Chavez, "most of the bidders disqualified can probably do the work, but they had incomplete requirements and we cannot let this pass."

"LRTA had a pre-bid conference and another meeting to remind them to follow the checklist required in accordance with the Procurement Law," Chavez added.

LRTA Administrator Mel Robles said that, in turning down almost all of the interested parties, the agency is "sending a strong message here—all the rules must be followed. Everything must be transparent."

LRTA declared a failed bid for the project's P2.8-billion Package A, which

ONLY DMCI/ B4

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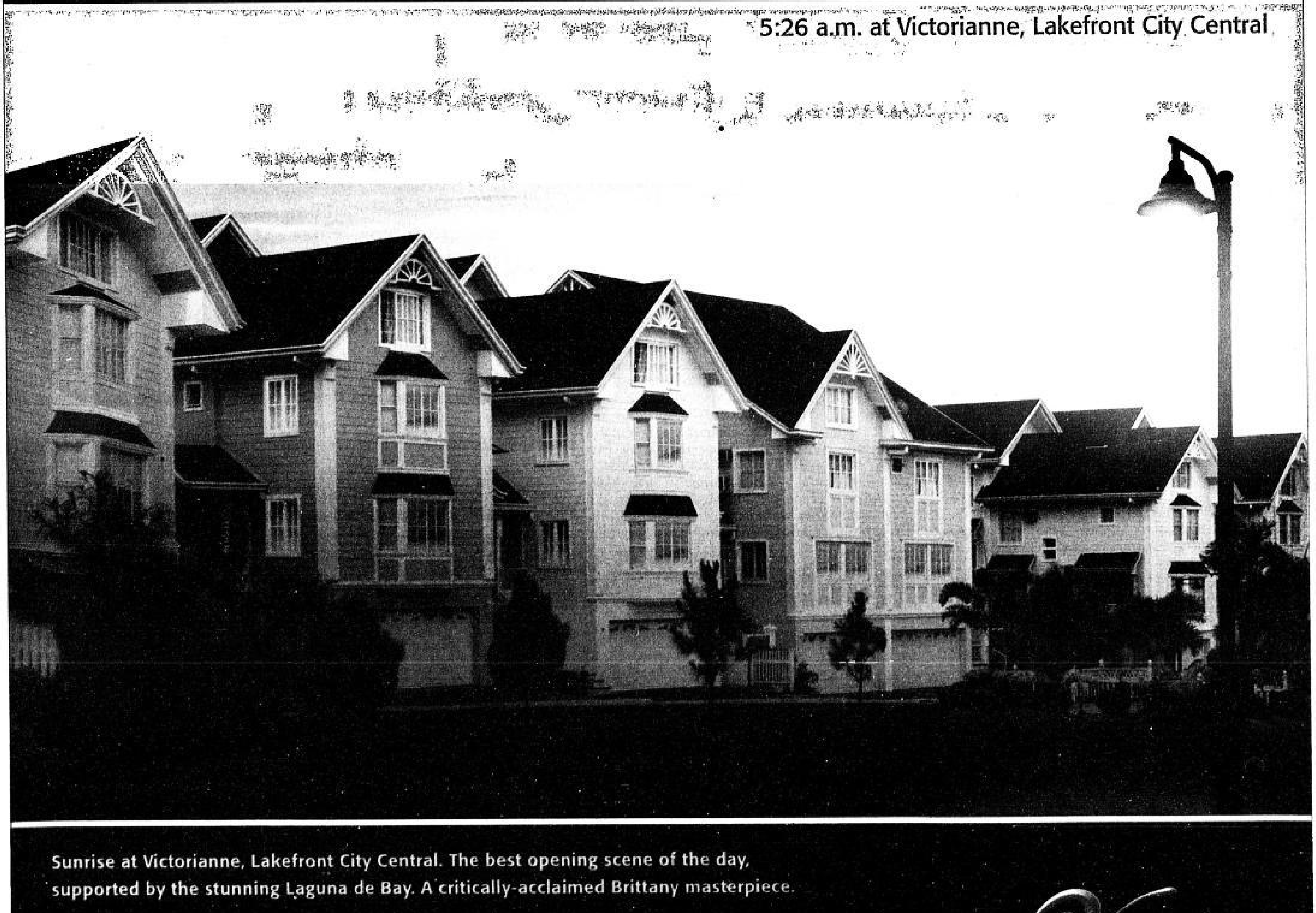

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BIR order slapping 10% tax on block sales recalled

Rule up for further review

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson and Michelle Remo

THE BUREAU OF INTERNAL Revenue (BIR) has recalled "for further study" a circular imposing a 10-percent tax on net capital gains from block sales of stocks after receiving complaints from market players, Revenue Deputy Commissioner Nelson Aspe said.

The agency is expected to issue another memorandum circular on the suspension of the block sale tax rule soon although no timetable was set.

The Philippine Stock Exchange, which also sought the suspension of the rule, said the imposition of this tax would likely result in revenue losses for the government.

Stock brokers interviewed said the 10-percent tax would become a major stumbling block to potential merger and acquisition deals.

PSE president Francis Lim said that under the current practice, block sales were covered by a stock transaction tax equivalent to one-half of one percent of the gross selling price.

Lim said that based on PSE computations, the estimated revenue loss for the government in terms of stock transaction tax collection as a result of the rule might have already amounted to P26 million since the memorandum was issued four days ago.

"Since the market was made aware of the revenue memorandum circular on block sales last Monday, our stock market plunged P3.9 billion in terms of average value turnover, compared to P5.4 billion before Monday," Lim added.

Block sales account for 15 percent of the total value turnover in a year, the PSE said.

Under the Securities Regulation Code, a block sale is a matched trade that does not go through an order matching system of the stock exchange. It is prearranged by broker-dealers' clients and entered directly into the PSE system as a done deal.

The BIR circular, citing Section 127 of the Tax Code of 1997, said that shares that were not disposed of through the stock exchange should be levied a final tax of either 5 percent or 10 percent on net capital gains.

Revenue Commissioner Lilian Hefti said in the circular that the principle underlying this "preferential treatment" was the national goal of promoting and hastening the development of the domestic capital market by enticing the general public to actively take part in the trading in the local stock exchange.

Hefti said any transaction that, in effect, barred the public by any means from taking part in the trading should be taxed under relevant provisions of the Tax Code.

Additional TKC Steel shares listed

SHARES OF TKC STEEL CORP. YESTERDAY closed at P10 per share, higher than the P9.68 offer price for its additional shares but 32 percent off its perviously traded price of P14.75 per share.

Yesterday, 235 million TKC Steel shares were listed in rites graced by President Macapagal-Arroyo at the Ayala stock exchange.

The company raised P2.2 billion from the additional offering, which boosted its market capital to about P9.1 billion.

Stock brokers said investors picked up the stock on bets of higher growth from the company's planned capacity expansion.

"We expect the company to grow faster in terms of earnings as it expands capacity here and in China," said Joseph Roxas, president at Eagle Equities Inc.

Proceeds from TKC's offering will be used to finance its blast furnace facility and the expansion programs of its two subsidiaries: Treasure Steelworks Corp. (TSC), which operates the largest steel billet-making plant in the country in terms of installed capacity, and Zhang Zhou Stronghold Steel Works Co. Ltd. (ZZS), a manufacturer of steel pipes in the southeastern Chinese province of Fujian.

TKC Steel is building the first blast furnace in the country to manufacture steel billets. This facility is expected to start commercial operations in the fourth quarter next year. The blast furnace will double the steel billet production of Treasure Steelworks to 600,000 metric tons a year, from 300,000 MT a year. The blast furnace will supply the billet raw material requirements of its China subsidiary, ZZS, and bolster its capacity to manufacture quality specialty pipe products.

TKC Steel president Anthony S. Dizon said that to ensure the supply of iron ore for its planned capacity expansion, the company had formed a joint venture with Mikro-Tech and Karanglan Resources and Mining Corp. to operate an exploration and mining company in Bayog, Zamboanga del Sur. This 8,000-hectare tenement is said to contain an estimated 50 million MT of iron ore reserves.

TKC Steel is also in talks with a group from Rizal province for a similar arrangement, to supply 30 million metric tons of iron ore reserves. *Elizabeth S. Lacson*

Research firm sees 7.1% GDP growth in 2008

FORMER NATIONAL ECONOMIC Development Authority chief Cayetano W. Paderanga, who is now chair of economic research firm Idea Inc., is projecting a 7.1-percent gross domestic product growth for 2008.

For this year, the economy is projected to grow by 6.7 percent.

During a presentation of the 2008 Economic Prospects, which was sponsored by Bank of Commerce (BOC), Paderanga said economy growth would still be driven by the services sector, which was projected to grow by 8.6 percent this year and 9.1 percent next year.

Industry comes in second with the expected growth rate of 6.4 percent by the end of this year and 6.6 percent by the end of next year. Agriculture, fisheries and forestry sector is seen to post a 2.5-percent growth by the end of this year and 2.4 percent next year.

Overall, Paderanga said the prospects were up, even as the country is buoyed by the growth of the Southeast Asian region.

BSP: T-bill rates should remain low

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILIPINAS sees no reason for the government's Treasury bill yields to rise given its recent interest rate cuts and the ample liquidity in the financial system.

BSP Deputy Governor Diwa Guinigundo told reporters the T-bill rates should remain low and the national government was right in rejecting most bids during the primary T-bills auction last Monday to prevent increases in the rates.

"Why will they (banks) increase their bids when the BSP is bringing down its rates? They should realize that if you have ample liquidity in the system, interest rates in the market should be low," Guinigundo said.

The banks that participated in the primary T-bills auction attempted to push up the yields even as the BSP had slashed its benchmark interest rates in two consecutive months by a total of 50 basis points. The central bank's overnight borrowing rate is now at a 15-year low of 5.5 percent.

During last Monday's auction, rates on the 91-day T-bill rate, used as benchmark in pricing loans, declined to 3.672 percent from 3.7 percent during the last auction two weeks ago.

The rate on the 182-day T-bill tenor averaged lower at 4.692 percent from 4.707 percent while the 364-day T-bill average rate also slipped to 5.567 percent from 5.628 percent.

The auction committee accepted only P3.29 billion out of its P6 billion offering while tenders amounted to P9.8 billion. Had it awarded its offering in full, the T-bill rates would have risen across the board.

Bankers interviewed said the market was demanding higher yields from T-bills to make them more competitive versus the BSP's high-yielding special deposit accounts (SDAs). Others said the market was pushing up the T-bill rates to compensate for the impact of the declining SDA yields following the BSP's monetary easing in the last two months.

When the BSP cut its overnight borrowing and lending rates on Oct. 4 and again on Nov. 15, it also lowered the yields on SDAs.

Guinigundo said the market should not use the SDAs as an excuse to drive up T-bill rates.

"The T-bills and SDAs are different instruments. The T-bills, they can sell or trade. The SDAs are simply deposits in the central bank, so there's really a premium (paid) on SDAs," he said.

The SDAs were previously not attractive to banks despite their higher yields because they were not backed by collateral unlike the central bank's primary monetary tool—the overnight borrowings. But placements in SDAs have dramatically increased since May this

BSP: T-BILL/ B5

PDIC head gets seat in int'l deposit insurers council

PHILIPPINE DEPOSIT INSURANCE CORP. officer in charge and EVP Imelda S. Singzon was elected to the executive council of the International Association of Deposit Insurers (IADI) during the recently concluded 6th IADI Annual General Meeting and Conference held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Singzon will hold the post for a three-year term.

PDIC, a state agency mandated to provide depositor protection, is a founding member of the IADI, a nonprofit organization established on May 6, 2002 to promote international cooperation and guidance in the field of deposit insurance. IADI is based in Basel, Switzerland.

The association is composed of 48 members, six associates, six observers and 10 partners. The executive council is the governing board of the IADI. The organization has seven regional committees to reflect the common interests of the different regions covered.

CURRENCIES

November 23, 2007 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.673129	1.000000	43.2670
Japan	Yen	0.006204	0.009216	0.3987
United Kingdom	Pound	1.389607	2.064400	89.3204
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.086529	0.128548	5.5619
Switzerland	Franc	0.611490	0.908430	39.3050
Canada	Dollar	0.682894	1.014507	43.8947
Singapore	Dollar	0.464387	0.689893	29.8496
Australia	Dollar	0.585686	0.870095	37.6464
Bahrain	Dinar*	1.794962	2.666596	115.3756
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.181187	0.269172	11.6463
Brunei	Dollar	0.462790	0.687521	29.7470
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000072	0.000107	0.0046
Thailand	Baht	0.021492	0.031928	1.3814
UAE	Dirham	0.183324	0.272346	11.7836
EU	Euro	1.000000	1.485600	64.2775
Korea	Won	0.000722	0.001072	0.0464
China	Yuan**	0.090786	0.134871	5.8355
Denmark	Kroner	0.134159	0.199306	8.6234
India	Rupee	0.017054	0.025336	1.0962
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.199151	0.295858	12.8009
New Zealand	Dollar	0.505808	0.751428	32.5120
Sweden	Kroner	0.107343	0.159469	6.8997
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.020816	0.030924	1.3380

Source: Reuters' forex closing prices as of NY time—Nov. 22, 2007

* Various banks in Bahrain as quoted in Reuters' Screen. ** Asian time closing rate as of Nov. 22, 2007

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of November 23, 2007)

52-WEEK HIGH	52-WEEK LOW	STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
		BANKS					
17.5	6.8	Asiatrust Development Bank Inc.	8.3	8.5	8.3	8.5	57,000
73	43	Banco de Oro-EPCI Inc.	50.5	52	50.5	52	711,200
73.5	53	Bank of the Philippine Islands	61.5	62	61	61.5	1,913,100
748	540	China Banking Corp.	675	675	670	670	5,480
23.5	14	Citystate Savings Bank	23	23	23	23	600
0.63	0.36	Export and Industry Bank Inc.	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	3,000,000
75.5	47.5	Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co.	52	53	52	52	1,822,200
65.5	39	Philippine National Bank	42.5	43	42.5	42.5	164,500
68	46	Philippine Savings Bank	61	61	60.5	60.5	2,000
39.57	20	Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.	23	23.5	23	23.5	502,000
90	61	Security Bank Corp.	68	68	68	68	259,400
66	42	Union Bank of the Philippines	43	43.5	43	43.5	20,200
		OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
2.22	0.6	Bankard Inc.	1.9	1.96	1.9	1.96	373,000
16.25	4.6	CitisecOnline.com Inc.	11	11	10.75	11	141,400
5.9	4.8	I-Remit Inc.	5.2	5.5	5.1	5.4	38,973,000
1,970.00	1,580.00	Manulife Financial Corp.	1,670.00	1,670.00	1,670.00	1,670.00	500
5	2.7	National Reinsurance Corp. of the Phils.	2.8	2.9	2.75	2.85	22,513,000
1,390.00	260	The Philippine Stock Exchange Inc.	1,105.00	1,105.00	1,100.00	1,100.00	3,600
2,500.00	1,970.00	Sun Life Financial Inc.	2,215.00	2,215.00	2,215.00	2,215.00	150
1.94	1.3	iVantage Corp.	1.46	1.46	1.46	1.46	50,000
		ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
6.2	3.8	Aboitiz Power Corp.	4.8	4.85	4.8	4.85	4,562,000
70.5	49	First Gen Corp.	58	60.5	58	60.5	272,900
92	51	First Phil. Holdings Corp.	61.5	61.5	58.5	60	1,100,900
17.5	8.8	Manila Water Co. Inc.	16.25	16.25	15.75	16	6,347,100
105.45	27.73	Manila Electric Co.	70	70.5	69.5	70	1,109,400
7.8	4.1	PNOC Energy Development Corp.	6.9	7	6.7	7	27,177,000
7.4	3.95	Petron Corp.	5.7	5.8	5.6	5.7	3,978,000
14.75	6.4	Phoenix Petroleum Philippines Inc.	6.4	7	6.4	7	33,000
2.04	0.91	Trans-Asia Oil and Energy Dev't Corp.	1.3	1.34	1.26	1.34	1,989,000
		FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
6.3	3.4	Alaska Milk Corp.	4.95	4.95	4.95	4.95	7,000
2.32	1.48	Alliance Tuna International Inc.	1.56	1.58	1.48	1.5	1,906,000
28.5	19.5	Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	22	22	22	22	305,500
61	39	Jollibee Foods Corp.	48	48	47	47	22,500
0.98	0.5	RFM Corp.	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	930,000
3.3	2.06	Roxas Holdings	2.65	2.7	2.65	2.65	652,000
80	42.5	San Miguel Corp. "A"	44	44.5	42.5	42.5	68,200
88	43	San Miguel Corp. "B"	45.5	45.5	43	44	699,000
20.75	13.5	Universal Robina Corp.	13.75	14	13.75	14	2,518,800
0.55	0.24	Vitarich Corp.	0.3	0.33	0.24	0.33	550,000
		CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
9.2	4.95	Holcim Philippines Inc.	8	8	8	8	1,760,000
2	0.81	Southeast Asia Cement Holdings Inc.	0.96	0.96	0.95	0.95	1,810,000
23	1	TKC Steel Corp.	10	10.25	9.5	10	75,613,600
		CHEMICALS					
6.3	3.75	Chemrez Technologies Inc.	4	4.1	4	4.1	62,000
1.46	0.51	Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	50,000
		DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
0.75	0.17	Picop Resources Inc.	0.35	0.36	0.35	0.36	530,000
9	7.3	Splash Corp.	7.5	7.7	7.3	7.4	439,000
		HOLDING FIRMS					
39	18.75	ABS-CBN Holdings Corp.-PDR	34	34	34	34	37,000
3.9	2.7	A. Soriano Corp.	3.25	3.3	3.25	3.3	193,000
0.185	0.0525	AJO.net Holdings Inc.	0.115	0.12	0.11	0.12	58,930,000
1.28	0.29	APC Group Inc.	0.57	0.58	0.57	0.58	480,000
3.65	1.5	ATN Holdings Inc. "A"	2.6	2.7	2.6	2.7	131,000
0.018	0.0075	Abacus Cons. Res. and Hold'gs Inc. "A"	0.0095	0.01	0.0095	0.01	104,000,000
0.019	0.0075	Abacus Cons. Res. and Hold'gs Inc. "B"	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	2,000,000
9.7	5.8	Aboitiz Equity Ventures Inc.	6.6	6.7	6.6	6.7	359,000
0.021	0.009	Alcorn Gold Resources Corp.	0.013	0.013	0.013	0.013	36,000,000
7.3	3.5	Alliance Global Group Inc.	5.2	5.3	5.2	5.3	9,864,000
1.38	0.57	Alsons Consolidated Resources Inc.	0.84	0.84	0.84	0.84	40,000
2.9	0.89	Anglo-Philippine Holdings Corp.	2.4	2.42	2.38	2.42	1,369,000
645	397.92	Ayala Corp.	560	560	545	555	174,570
5.8	1.64	Benpres Holdings Corp.	3.75	3.8	3.6	3.65	7,941,000
12	4.95	DMCI Holdings Inc.	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	421,700
3.55	1.76	House of Investments Inc.	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	200,000
14.5	8.4	JG Summit Holdings Inc.	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	4,574,500
5.9	0.61	Jolliville Holdings Corp.	1.78	1.78	1.74	1.76	34,000
3.15	1.42	Lodestar Investment Hldgs Corp.	3.15	3.15	3.15	3.15	15,592,000
0.8	0.23	MEDCO Holdings Inc.	0.41	0.41	0.4	0.4	200,000
11.5	1.5	Minerales Industrias Corp.	6.2	6.3	6	6.1	2,331,000
8.5	3	PAL Holdings Inc.	5.6	5.6	5.3	5.4	32,000
0.28	0.016	Pacifica Inc. "A"	0.23	0.23	0.21	0.215	161,880,000
452.5	268.53	SM Investments Corp.	327.5	332.5	327.5	330	232,270
0.73	0.14	Sinophil Corp.	0.33	0.34	0.33	0.33	4,800,000
0.75	0.1	Wellex Industries Inc.	0.27	0.28	0.27	0.28	1,260,000
		PROPERTY					
8.9	5	Anchor Land Holdings Inc.	7.2	7.4	7.2	7.4	25,000
1.06	0.4	Araneta Properties Inc.	0.63	0.63	0.63	0.63	10,000
19.25	11.88	Ayala Land Inc.	15.75	16	15.75	16	22,759,500
1.88	1	Belle Corp.	1.16	1.18	1.16	1.18	2,213,000
4.7	3	Cebu Holdings Inc.	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.75	4,000
3.83	2	City and Land Developers Inc.	2	2	2	2	2,000
0.86	0.39	Crown Equities Inc.	0.57	0.58	0.57	0.58	410,000
0.99	0.52	Empire East Land Holdings Inc.	0.73	0.74	0.72	0.74	450,000
6.9	1.08	Eton Properties Philippines Inc.	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	70,000
0.47	0.0575	Ever Gotesco Resources and Hold'gs Inc.	0.22	0.225	0.22	0.225	12,670,000
1.48	0.61	Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.93	0.96	0.93	0.95	3,520,000
2.44	1.28	Filinvest Land Inc.	1.54	1.58	1.52	1.54	8,527,000
2.9	1.18	Keppel Philippines Properties Inc.	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	120,000
4.6	1.86	Megaworld Corp.	3.85	3.85	3.8	3.8	16,079,000
6.4	1.5	Metro Pacific Investments Corp.	4.2	4.2	3.95	4	143,000
5.2	2.2	Metro Pacific Investments Corp.-Warrants	2.9	2.9	2.8	2.85	271,000
0.7	0.125	Phil. Estates Corp.	0.28	0.31	0.28	0.31	360,000
0.87	0.32	Philippine Realty and Holdings Corp.	0.43	0.43	0.43	0.43	220,000
9.2	1.32	Polar Property Holdings Corp.	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.75	60,000
23	14.5	Robinson Land Corp.	17.5	17.75	17.5	17.5	3,077,800
5.9	1.93	SM Development Corp.-	4.05	4.05	3.9	3.95	336,000
13.5	7.6	SM Prime Holdings Inc.	11	11.5	11	11.5	7,805,800
3.25	1.5	Shang Properties Inc.	2.2	2.2	2.14	2.2	317,000
4.5	0.38	Sta. Lucia Land Inc.	2.04	2.04	1.9	2	239,000
1.34	0.46	Suntrust Home Developers Inc.	0.51	0.51	0.51	0.51	40,000
0.49	0.09	Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	500,000
7.5	3.65	Vista Land and Lifescapes Inc.	4.75	4.9	4.75	4.9	17,139,000
		MEDIA					
38.5	18.75	ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	31.5	33	31.5	33	108,800
12	7.6	GMA Holdings Inc.	7.8	7.8	7.6	7.7	3,613,000
11.75	7.6	GMA Network Inc.	7.7	7.7	7.6	7.7	92,000
		TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
2.12	1.1	Digital Telecommunications Phils. Inc.	1.28	1.28	1.28	1.28	445,000
1,750.00	1,180.00	Globe Telecom Inc.	1,405.00	1,425.00	1,405.00	1,420.00	57,530
3,285.00	2,250.00	Phil. Long Distance Telephone Co.	3,005.00	3,010.00	3,005.00	3,010.00	38,400
8.1	5.5	Pilipino Telephone Corp.	6.9	7	6.9	7	841,000
		INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
0.39	0.17	Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	2,690,000
15.25	2.1	Diversified Financial Network Inc.	14.75	14.75	14.25	14.5	1,745,000
11.5	2.5	IPVG Corp.	7.5	7.8	7.5	7.8	217,000
0.065	0.027	ISM Communications Corp.	0.037	0.038	0.037	0.038	8,300,000
29.5	8.5	Imperial Resources Inc. "A"	15	15	15	15	7,200
5	1.62	Information Capital Tech. Ventures Inc.	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	17,000
0.32	0.05	Island Information and Technology Inc.	0.175	0.18	0.175	0.18	1,010,000
2.08	1.1	Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.36	1.38	1.3	1.38	627,000
0.0725	0.03	Philweb Corp.	0.048	0.049	0.047	0.048	9,000,000
5.8	1.64	Transpacific Broadband Group Int'l. Inc.	2.6	2.7	2.6	2.65	669,000
		TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
2.14	1.14	Aboitiz Transport System Corp.	1.36	1.36	1.32	1.32	363,000
42.5	18.75	Int'l Container Terminal Services Inc.	38.5	39.5	38.5	39	4,720,400
2.04	1.06	Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	40,000
		HOTEL & LEISURE					
16.5	5	Acesite (Phils.) Hotel Corp.	9	9	9	9	2,792,000
4.25	1.8	Leisure and Resprts World Corp.	2.22	2.48	2.22	2.48	199,000
6	2.16	Manila Jockey Club Inc.	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	20,000
1.16	0.32	Premiere Entertainment Productions Inc.	1.08	1.08	1.02	1.04	8,534,000
1.2	0.54	Waterfront Philippines Inc.	0.81	0.82	0.81	0.82	3,120,000
		EDUCATION					
3.7	2.6	iPeople Inc.	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	16,000
		DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
6	2.04	Macroasia Corp.	4.75	4.75	4.75	4.75	1,000
17.25	9.8	Pacific Online Systems Corp.	11.5	11.75	11.5	11.5	866,000
30	6.4	Paxys Inc.	6.4	7.1	6.4	7	576,000
450	390	eTelecare Global Solutions Inc.	410	450	400	420	167,090
		MINING					
0.017	0.0085	Abra Mining and Industrial Corp.	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	56,000,000
6.9	3.6	Apex Mining Co. Inc. "A"	5.5	6	5.5	6	988,000
7	3.85	Apex Mining Co. Inc. "B"	5.9	6.3	5.9	6.3	1,136,000
21.25	7.8	Atlas Cons. Mining and Dev't Corp.	12.75	13	12.75	13	384,800
14.25	8.9	Benguet Corp. "A"	11.5	11.5	11.5	11.5	28,500
12.75	1.96	Dizon Copper Silver Mines Inc.	9	9	8.5	8.6	139,000
3.1	0.6	GEOGRACE Resources Philippines Inc.	1.86	1.86	1.68	1.76	73,138,000
0.56	0.18	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. "A"	0.44	0.47	0.43	0.47	98,500,000
0.61	0.22	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. "B"	0.47	0.51	0.47	0.51	40,310,000
0.038	0.017	Manila Mining Corp. "A"	0.026	0.027	0.026	0.027	286,500,000
0.041	0.02	Manila Mining Corp. "B"	0.029	0.03	0.029	0.03	220,400,000
30	2.12	NIHAO Minerals Resources Int'l Inc.	19	19	18	19	1,307,300
0.021	0.0088	Omico Corp.	0.013	0.013	0.012	0.013	23,900,000
0.015	0.007	Omico Corp.-Warrants	0.009	0.009	0.009	0.009	2,000,000
11.25	3.5	Philex Mining Corp.	9.5	9.7	9.3	9.7	4,450,000
49	14.75	Semirara Mining Corp.	41	41	41	41	1,000
1.36	0.5	United Paragon Mining Corp.	0.69	0.72	0.69	0.72	110,000
1.8	0.72	Vulcan Industrial and Mining Corp.	1.08	1.14	1.08	1.12	2,915,000
		OIL					
0.58	0.25	Basic Energy Corp.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	100,000
0.029	0.01	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. "A"	0.023	0.023	0.023	0.023	77,800,000
0.03	0.01	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. "B"	0.024	0.025	0.024	0.025	33,500,000
13.75	9	Petroenergy Resources Corp.	9.8	9.8	9.8	9.8	32,000
0.032	0.0095	The Philodrill Corp.	0.026	0.026	0.025	0.026	99,100,000

AVERAGES			VOLUME	VALUE
Financial	847.28 UP	3.09	70,512,330	575,246,600.00
Industrial	4,009.21 DOWN	13.93	134,492,900	1,347,584,370.00
Holding Firms	1,980.40 DOWN	8.10	413,039,040	420,997,405.00
Property	1,595.02 UP	17.97	97,007,100	670,510,620.00
Service	1,783.12 UP	9.21	47,262,420	543,480,300.00
Mining & Oil	8,103.20 UP	213.91	1,020,739,600	302,482,485.00
All Shares Index	2,127.71 UP	5.94		
PSEi	3,494.44 UP	15.50		
		GRAND TOTALS	1,783,143,390	3,860,301,780.00

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Gov't collects ₱8.87B in GOCC dividends

By Michelle V. Remo

GOVERNMENT-OWNED AND -CONTROLLED corporations had turned over to the state the dividends generated from January to October, amounting to P8.87 billion, data from the Department of Finance showed.

The amount represented a 32-percent increase from the P6.69 billion collected in the same period last year.

The state-owned firms are directed to strictly remit dividends to state coffers.

In October alone, dividends collected by the government amounted to P123 million, up 26.8 percent from the P97 million recorded in the same month last year.

Data from the DOF showed that the biggest revenue contributor among state-owned firms in the first 10 months of the year was the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, which turned over P2.5 billion.

This was despite the central bank's budget deficit, resulting from its intervention in the foreign exchange market to temper the appreciation of the peso.

The second biggest contributor of dividends was Philippine National Oil Co.-Energy Development Corp. (PNOC-EDC) at P1.455 billion.

Other state-owned firms that landed on the Top 5 were the Philippine Ports Authority at P1.366 billion, PNOC at P1.185 billion and Land Bank of the Philippines at P1 billion.

The charters of most state-owned firms require them to remit at least 50 percent of their income to the national government as dividends.

Finance Undersecretary Jeremias Paul Jr. said that, based on the 2007 fiscal program, the government has already exceeded its full-year target on dividends collection. He said the goal had been set at only P4 billion.

The DOF earlier told GOCCs and GFIs to remit accurate amounts of dividends to the government. Paul said that, due to the government's leniency in the past, many GOCCs would fail to remit dividends.

To aid in efforts to instill financial discipline among state-owned firms, Paul said, the government would come out with "performance contracts" with GOCCs. He said the first batch of contracts would be out before the end of the year.

A performance contract will indicate a state-owned firm's objectives, especially income targets and those involving service delivery.

"The aim is to make GOCCs financially self-sustaining," Paul said, adding that the government hopes to improve the quality of the state firms' services and minimize their dependence on subsidies.

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In PNOC-EDC sale, benefits seen to outweigh costs

By Abigail L. Ho

IN THE FACE OF STRONG OPPOSITION from members of the Joint Congressional Power Commission, the Department of Energy is standing by the state's decision to auction off the government's stake in PNOC Energy Development Corp.

Energy Secretary Angelo Reyes said each decision—like the one that the government made with regard to its remaining 60-percent stake in PNOC-EDC—had corresponding costs and benefits.

He said it was understandable that the JCPC had concerns about selling what was deemed as one of the country's "crown jewels" and one of the most profitable government-owned or controlled corporations.

But the sale also had its benefits, he said.

"The government has to raise money to address its budget deficit," Reyes said. "It also wants to (turn over PNOC-EDC) to private hands that may be able to run it better."

He added that the government also needs money to deliver more services to the people.

"Any option you takes has costs and benefits to it. We've discussed both the costs and benefits before making that decision," he said.

The JCPC, co-chaired by Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago, questioned the sale of the PNOC-EDC stake to Red Vulcan Holdings Corp., a consortium composed of the Lopezes' First Gen Corp. and Netherlands-based Spalmare Holdings BV and Prime Terracota Holdings Corp.

She called the sale "illegal," citing RA 9136 or the Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001 (Epira).

According to Epira, PNOC-EDC is "the only entity in the government mandated to explore and develop indigenous sources of energy."

"So, in our view, the sale, if it proceeds, will be a violation of the Epira," Santiago said. "It would, therefore, be illegal and, in that sense, might be a ground for action before our courts."

Philippine National Oil Co. president Antonio Cailao, who also chaired the PNOC Privatization Committee, defended the sale, saying the government merely took advantage of the perfect timing to let go of its PNOC-EDC shareholdings.

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Craft firms to push 'culture tourism'

By Ronnel W. Domingo

HANDICRAFT PRODUCERS AND experts from at least 20 countries are gathered in Manila for a four-day forum and trade fair aimed at promoting arts and craft as well as tourism with cultural twists.

The First International Arts and Crafts Expo of the Asean Handicraft Promotion and Development Association (Ahpada), hosted by a Department of Tourism-led national organizing committee, started last Nov. 22 and will end on the 25th.

Tourism Secretary Joseph Ace H. Durano said Ahpada would address the need to match the growing demand of tourists for world-class crafts and provide sustainable livelihood for artisans.

Durano said the event sought to raise awareness of the importance of arts and crafts to the well-being and livelihood of artisans.

He added that the Expo serves also as a one-stop, convenient venue to market crafts of participating nations.

Exhibitors include those from the 10 members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations as well as Canada, China, India, Japan, Korea, Maldives, Nepal, Nigeria, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Tunisia and the United States.

Among the products on display and for sale are bath and linen, holiday décor, costume jewelry, fashion complements, fine jewelry, furniture, garden accessories, houseware, tableware, leather goods, and stationery and desk accessories.

Aside from the exhibit, the Expo also includes a forum on business opportunities, daily cultural entertainment and an international selling area.

The forum features lectures by industry experts on modern product designs, marketing trends, packaging and merchandising and protection of intellectual property of artisans.

"The market for cultural products has been growing as travel agents and tour operators meet the strong demand for tour packages with cultural components," Durano said.

"Whether tourists are on business or sightseeing, they buy tours with stops in festivals, museums, malls, or flea markets to collect crafts for souvenir, houseware, interior décor, gift-giving or investment," he explained.

Along with the DOT, the national organizing committee comprises the Department of Trade and Industry, Department of Foreign Affairs, Philippine Tourism Authority, Philippine Small and Medium Enterprise Development Foundation, and the Philippine Convention and Visitors Corp.

Our prospective principal in Australia,

SACAREN MINERAL HOLDINGS LIMITED

urgently needs the following:

☐ **(1) GENERAL MANAGER OPERATIONS / SENIOR MINE ENGINEER**

- Sacaren Mineral Holdings Limited, an ASX listed company, is progressing its definite feasibility study ("DFS") into the commencement of gold mining operations, located at South Laverton approximately 120 km. north east of Kalgoorlie. The company owns a modern 2.4 mtpa milling facility, associated infrastructure and is currently undertaking regional exploration.
- We are currently seeking a GM (Operations)/ Senior Mining Engineer with extensive experience in open pit gold mining, feasibility studies, Large-scale project management and contract negotiation. Suitable qualifications, expertise in mining software and methodologies are essential.

Key Responsibilities Include:

- Managing the DFS, bringing the project to final decision status,
- Overseeing production start-up and managing all the company's pre-development and mining operations.
- Assisting the managing Director in assessing new acquisition opportunities.
- Based in Perth, this position has outstanding long term potential.
- Interview will be on December 1, 2007 10AM at the Tower Club, 33rd floor Philamlife Tower Club Corp. 8767 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City, Philippines. Please wear smart casual attire.

☐ **(3) EXPLORATION GEOLOGIST**

Sacaren Mineral Holdings is a dynamic gold exploration company which last year purchased a large tenement holding and the Carosue gold treatment plant and mining camp, situated to north east of Kalgoorlie in Western Australia. Sacaren is completing a feasibility study, based on several previously mined and un-mined gold deposits. It is also carrying out "grass roots" exploration on highly prospective tenement holding with a view to re-commencing gold mining as soon as possible.

Gold mining ceased two years ago, with the Carosue gold treatment plant placed on care and maintenance at that time. Sacaren has recently purchased additional tenements and gold deposits at Wallbrook, near Carosue, and is in the process of adding these to the feasibility study and exploration budget.

- You will be responsible for implementing all aspects of field of exploration with the support of the Sacaren Team, from geochemical sampling and geological mapping to drill supervision and logging, and will report to the exploration manager. This challenging role requires relevant geological qualifications, enthusiasm for outdoor work, a flair for communication, and a good working knowledge of filed equipment, techniques and computing packages.
- You will be an integral part of a small team, working with geological staff and external consultants and contractor as required. The Sacaren approach is to facilitate professional development. All staff are actively encouraged to develop their professional interests and skills.
- You will be based in Carosue, but with regular time in the Perth office, subject to work loads. Field trips have nominal 12-hour days, based on a fly-in fly-out roster Perth to Kalgoorlie
- An attractive salary package will be offered to the right candidate.
- *Interview will be on December 1, 2007 10AM at the Tower Club, 33rd floor Philamlife Tower Club Corp. 8767 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City, Philippines. Please wear smart casual attire.*

☐ **(3) SENIOR EXPLORATION GEOLOGISTS**

- You will be responsible for researching project area, target generation and supervising the implementation of all aspect of field with the support of the Sacaren team, from geochemical sampling and geological mapping to drill supervision and logging, and will report to the exploration manager. This challenging role requires relevant geological qualifications, enthusiasm for outdoor work, a flair for communication, and a good working knowledge of filed equipment, techniques and computing packages.
- You will be an integral part of a small team, working with geological staff and external consultants and contractor as required. The Sacaren approach is to facilitate professional development. All staff are actively encouraged to develop their professional interests and skills.
- You will be based in Carosue, but with regular time in the Perth office, subject to work loads. Field trips have nominal 12-hour days, based on a fly-in fly-out roster Perth to Kalgoorlie
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- Interview will be on December 1, 2007 10 AM at the Tower Club, 33rd floor Philamlife Tower Club Corp. 8767 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City, Philippines. Please wear smart casual attire.

☐ **(3) FIELD TECHNICIAN**

- You will be responsible for implementing all aspects field exploration logistics, as well asgeochemical sampling, surveying, drill-site technical assistance, and geochemical support duties. This challenging role requires relevant exploration field experience, familiarity with geological concepts enthusiasm for out door work, a flair for communication, and a good working knowledge of field equipment techniques and basic computing packages. You will report to the field supervisor.
- You will be an integral part of a small team. Working with geological staff and external consultants and contractors as required. The Sacaren team approach is to facilitate professional development. All staff are actively encouraged to develop their professional interest and skills.
- You will be initially based in Carosue, but with regular time in the Perth office, subject to work loads field trips have nominal 12-hour days, based on a fly-in fly-out roster Perth to Kalgoorlie.
- An attractive salary package will be offered to the right candidate.
- Interview will be on December 1, 2007 10AM at the Tower Club, 33rd floor Philamlife Tower Club Corp. 8767 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City, Philippines. Please wear smart casual attire.

☐ **BOILERMAKERS / WELDERS**

- A Strong understanding of Occupational Health and Safety Policies and working procedures
- The ability to interpret work instructions and technical drawings common to the trade (3D,Interpretor)
- Demonstrate experience in welding (90%Mig, Arc, & Tig)
- Fabricate products by selecting appropriate equipment tools and methods to methods to maximize productivity.
- Takes measurement and reading using instruments of appropriate accuracy to ensure pre-determined quality standards are achieved.
- A minimum of two years post –trade experience would be ideal
- A background in sheet metal and/or bodybuilding would be ideal in this role.
- Interview will be on November 30, 2007 8AM, at No.6 San Agustin St. Rosalia Compound Culiat Quezon City.

☐ **MACHINISTS**

- Working in a high volume/repetition environment these role will be set , edit and operate CNC Lathes with Auto Chuck and fitted with One touch IGF-X controllers
- Interview will be on November 30, 2007 8AM at No. 6 San Agustin St. Rosalia Compound, Culiat Quezon City

☐ **FITTERS / MECHANICS**

- The role will be supporting the manufacture of RC rotary drilling equipment to safely and efficiently produce components and product to pre-determined quality standard.
- The main duties will include maintenance construction and repair of drill rigs. Imperative to this role is to safely maintain service and provide technical support to the manufacture of drill rigs and ancillary equipment.
- To ensure safe and efficient utilization of resources. This will include the completion of maintenance records, logs and documentation as required ensuring statutory requirements are maintained for respective equipment. Work will be carried out in a workshop environment and (on the rare occasion) may require remote field locations for a period of time (as mutually agreed)
- Interview will be on November 30, 2007 8AM at No. 6 San Agustin St. Rosalia Compound, Culiat Quezon City

Terms and conditions of employment to be discussed during the interview. Interested applicants may email their detailed resume to rpaladio_drillingadvisory@yahoo.com or fax to (632) 9520531

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Manufacturing output down by 1% in Sept.

By Michelle V. Remo

MANUFACTURING OUTPUT, AS MEASURED by the volume of production, declined by 1 percent in September compared to the same month last year, according to the National Statistics Office.

The NSO data showed, however, that while the volume of production index (VoPI) hit -1 percent in September, it was a marked slowdown from the -5.7 percent in August.

In terms of value, manufacturing output registered a slight increase in September from the same month last year due to some price adjustments.

The Value of Production Index (VaPI), which measures output in terms of value with inflation taken into account, hit +0.7 percent during the month.

The continuing drop in the volume of manufacturing output was blamed partly on the rising peso and increasing power cost, which made local producers less competitive.

Benjamin Diokno, economics professor at the University of the Philippines, told the INQUIRER that the decreasing manufacturing output could mean job losses in the months ahead.

He noted that the declining production was consistent with the slowdown in the growth of merchandise exports.

"Because of the stronger peso, it makes more sense for some firms to simply import than produce goods locally. What's happening is that we are losing jobs here, and contributing to employment abroad," Diokno said in an interview.

The peso has posted record highs this year, recently breaching the 42-to-a-dollar territory, as the US dollar continues to weaken.

Although a rising peso helps trim foreign-currency denominated debts and temper inflation, it also adversely affects the competitiveness of local industries because local goods become more expensive.

Diokno said the continued drop in the manufacturing sector's production volume belied the robust growth of the overall economy as reported by the government's economic managers.

The government earlier reported that the country's gross domestic product grew 7.5 percent in the second quarter, the strongest finish in two decades.

"The data on manufacturing output is more relevant to the ordinary people. When output is declining, it means jobs are being lost," he said.

UAE remittance company sets up company in RP

By Doris C. Dumlao

ABU DHABI-BASED UAE EXCHANGE, ONE of the largest remittance companies in the Middle East, has set up shop in the Philippines to support its fast-growing business with overseas Filipino workers.

Visiting UAE Exchange managing director and CEO BR Shetty said in a briefing yesterday that remittances from the Middle East to the Philippines would likely increase as incomes rise in step with rising oil prices.

UAE Exchange is looking at a 24-percent annual growth in remittances flowing from the Middle East to the Philippines.

One reason is that demand for Filipino workers in the Middle East remains high because of their good quality of service and English proficiency.

The Philippines is UAE Exchange's second biggest market for remittances next to India.

Its global remittance volume amounts to about $9 billion a year.

With about one million Filipinos in six major states in the Gulf region, UAE Exchange expects annual remittances to the Philippines to soon hit $1 billion.

UAE Exchange currently processes $500 million worth of remittances to the Philippines.

UAE Exchange has 365 offices in 17 countries, including Australia, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Fiji, India, Kuwait, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Uganda, United Kingdom and United States.

Among UAE Exchange's correspondent banks in the Philippines are Allied Bank, Asia United Bank, Banco de Oro EPCI, Bank of the Philippine Islands, China Bank, Development Bank of the Philippines, Land Bank of the Philippines, Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co., Philippine National Bank, Rizal Commercial Banking Corp., United Coconut Planters bank and CARD Bank representing the microfinance sector.

BR Shetty and other top UAE Exchange officials were in town for the inauguration of the company's Philippine liaison office in Makati last Nov. 22.

DOE tightens monitoring . . .

From page B1

eas in the country," Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. chair Edgar Chua said, responding to calls from public transport operators that use gasoline-fed vehicles.

Petron chair Nicasio Alcantara, for his part, said the oil firm would also expand its network of stations that offered auto LPG, or liquefied petroleum gas used as transport fuel, from the present 16.

At current pump prices, auto LPG is priced about P15 to P16 a liter lower than regular gasoline.

But since only the public transport sector would benefit from the increase in the number of stations offering diesel discounts, Reyes said the DOE would continue to push for the reduction of import duties on crude and refined petroleum products.

"We submitted a request for a reduction in tariff to the Tariff Commission," he said, in response to the clamor of consumers for lower fares.

Shares close . . .

From page B1

how the benchmark composite was doing.

The composite index closed up 15.50 points at 3,494.44. The broader all-share index closed up 5.94 points at 2,127.71.

Gainers outnumbered decliners 71 to 30, while 54 stocks were unchanged.

A total of 1.8 billion shares worth P3.9 billion ($90.69 million) were traded.

PLDT added P10 to P3,010.

Power producer First Gen Corp. gained P2.50 to P60.50 after the government declared its consortium the winning bidder for a 60-percent stake in PNOC-Energy Development Corp. *AFP*

Businesses . . .

From page B1

hanced business strategies.

"We can thus expect that the kind of growth we've seen in the first two quarters will continue till the rest of the year," BSP Deputy Governor Diwa Guinigundo said in a press briefing yesterday.

Guinigundo said there was a close correlation between the optimistic outlook in previous surveys and the economic growth numbers that came out for this year.

In the past few years, the country's growth path was locked within a 5-6 percent range. But Philippine gross domestic product (GDP) grew to 7.3 percent in the first half of 2007, the highest among the middle-income countries of Southeast Asia.

It was the country's strongest performance in 20 years.

Aside from the robust first semester growth, respondents cited the low inflation environment, stable interest rates and appreciating peso.

The latest BSP survey, which was conducted between Oct. 8 and Nov. 9, covered a total of 1,048 firms drawn among the top 5,000 corporations, according to the Securities and Exchange Commission.

The highest confidence level in the fourth quarter was posted by the services sector at 60.3 percent.

The sharpest year-on-year increase in confidence level was posted by the construction sector, reflecting the current property boom.

Only DMCI passed . . .

From page B1

covers the construction of the viaduct and pedestrian overpass, on Monday.

Chavez said this was because the five companies that submitted the bids all lacked documents.

The Tuesday bidding for the P830-million Package B (train stations) failed for the same reason. There were only four bidders for the package.

Chavez said the bidders may have realized LRTA's seriousness in processing only complete bids because only two companies submitted documents yesterday, the third day of prequalification.

The day was devoted to the P2.04-billion Package C—the electromechanical component covering the rail tracks and related infrastructure.

Only the DMCI joint venture completed their documents. Its rival, Leighton Construction Phils. Inc.-A.M. Oreta Construction Joint Venture, still lacked documents.

The LRT-MRT interconnection is a 7.71-kilometer elevated line that would run from Monumento station of LRT Line 1 to North Avenue of MRT 3.

Average daily ridership of the LRTA system is expected to increase by 66.16 percent, or a total of 535,558 passengers from the current average of 322,309 passengers.

BSP: T-bill rates should …

From page B2

year, when the BSP amended its SDA rules which transformed this facility into a more powerful tool.

Under the new rules, even banks' trust departments and nonbank state corporations can place funds with the SDAs and earn attractive interest rates. The BSP has likewise made these instruments eligible as compliance to banks' 50-percent liquidity floor or the portion of deposits and deposit substitutes required to be held in the form of negotiable and transferable government securities as a buffer in case of a bank run or heavy withdrawals.

Based on the latest BSP data, funds placed in SDAs have reached over P450 billion or almost double the liquidity mopped up using the overnight borrowings.

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>
> PRESIDENT GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO
> 07 NOVEMBER 2003

Scattered here and there at Subic Bay are relics of the past – centuries-old cannons at the Spanish Gate, American bunkers secretly tucked in hillsides, and more American anti-aircraft battery cannons and defense coastal guns at the former Fort Wint on Grande Island.

Though mute witnesses to Subic Bay's history as a strategically located stronghold in Asia Pacific, each of them proudly echoes stories of past struggles and victories.

Another distinctive footnote in Subic's history stands along Waterfront Road – a row of 12 metal scrolls, quoting the 12 Philippine senators who voted for the non-renewal of the Bases Agreement in 1991.

Weathered and tarnished by rain and sun, the scrolls rest at the foot of the more recent Inang Laya – like peace offerings to the Motherland, finally proclaiming genuine sovereignty over all.

DENR-SBMA
MOU SIGNING
SUBIC BAY
METROPOLITAN AUTHORITY

MALACAÑAN PALACE

MANILA

MESSAGE

Warmest greetings to the officers and staff of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA) as you hold your 15th Anniversary.

The official turnover of the American military bases to the Philippine government on November 24, 1992 signaled the transformation of the Subic Bay Freeport into one of the country's leading investment and tourist destinations.

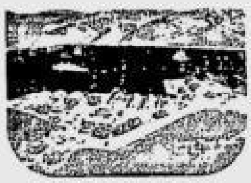
I laud the staff of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority headed by Administrator and CEO Armand C. Arreza, for your excellent job in attracting investments, providing employment to thousands of Filipinos, and contributing revenues to the national coffers. Indeed transforming the former US naval facility into a thriving economic zone is short of a miracle.

Our vision is to make the Subic-Clark Corridor a major industrial hub not only in our country but in the whole of Southeast Asia. With your continued support and dedication there is no doubt that we can achieve this.

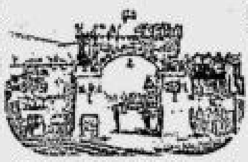
Again, congratulations for a job well done! More power and Mabuhay!

Gloria Arroyo
GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO

MANILA
November 2007

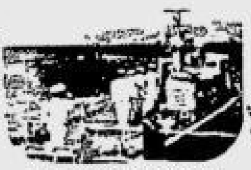


THE SPANIARDS DISCOVERED SUBIC BAY
In 1592, Juan de Salcedo, the last of the Spanish conquistadores, discovered Subic Bay and admired its deep water, sheltered anchorage, strategic location and healthy environment. In 1868, the King sent a military expedition to Subic Bay and declared it an ideal location for a naval base.

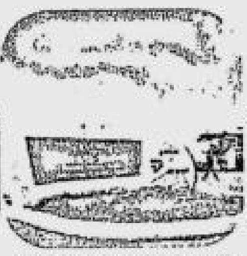


SUBIC BAY, SPAIN'S ROYAL PORT
In 1884, King Alfonso II issued a Royal Decree officially declaring Subic Bay as a naval port. The following year, Spain constructed an arsenal and the Ship Repair Facility in Subic Bay.

THE SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR
In 1899, Major Robert E.L. Spence of the US Army led the takeover of the Subic Bay Shipyard. In 1901, the US Navy selected Subic Bay as a repair and supply base site. Finally, in 1904, President Theodore Roosevelt issued an Executive Order designating Subic Bay and 70,000 hectares of its adjacent lands as an American military reservation.



AT THE FOREFRONT OF WWII
In 1941, Japanese fighter planes attacked Subic Bay. The 4th Marine Regiment was tasked to defend Subic but soon withdrew to Bataan. The Dewey Drydock was towed to the bottom of the Mariveles harbor to prevent it from falling into Japanese hands. Station Ship USS New York was scuttled in the bay. PT boats sank some Japanese ships prior to being ordered out of the Philippines.



BIRTH OF THE SUBIC NAVAL BASE
By 1945, control of the base returned to the Americans. The Americans granted full independence to the Philippines but Olongapo remained under the administration of the US Naval Reservation. The RP-US Military Bases Agreement was signed in 1947.

SUBIC BAY
THE LARGEST US NAVAL BASE
In 1951, the famous "Seabees" started the construction of the Naval Air Station which called for the flattening of a 1,200 ft. mountain, a feat which was said to be the equivalent of the digging of the Panama Canal. Subic Naval Base became home of the US Navy's Pacific Fleet and figured significantly in the Vietnam War in 1965 and the 1991 Gulf War.

SUBIC BAY
THE COUNTRY'S FIRST FREEPORT
On September 13, 1991, the 1947 Military Bases Agreement expired. On September 16 of the same year, the Philippine Senate voted against a new bases treaty. On March 13, 1992, Republic Act 7227 was enacted, creating the Subic Bay Freeport and Special Economic Zone, and the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA), the government agency tasked to manage and develop the Philippines' first Freeport.

SUBIC BAY
METROPOLITAN AUTHORITY

DEPARTMENT OF TRADE & INDUSTRY

PHILIPPINES

MESSAGE

Our warmest greetings to the officers, management and staff of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA) as you celebrate your 15th Anniversary on November 24, 2007.

As you reach another milestone, I join the men and women of SBMA in looking back to the time when the last American naval ship pulled out of the Port of Subic. That was when only a few believed that this former US military base would reach the heights that it now enjoys.

What has been happening over the last 15 years only proves that the tenacious and determined Filipino spirit can indeed overcome overwhelming odds. And such is the spirit that is now embodied by the Subic Bay Freeport Zone.

So on this occasion, I especially applaud the SBMA officials and employees for daring to go beyond Subic's original mandate of providing jobs and livelihood to the displaced workers of the former naval base. Indeed, Subic's new status as a catalyst for growth in the Central Luzon area would not have been reached were it not for the vibrancy and can-do attitude of the SBMA workforce.

The Department of Trade & Industry is one with SBMA in its aspirations for a more progressive future not only for the people of this region but also for the whole Philippine economy through its contributions to investments generation, job creation, and export growth. Your slogan – "Dare to Lead, Dare to Exceed Expectations" – points to an ambitious direction. Yet, considering the story of Subic and the SBMA, I believe this is naturally achievable.

Again, my congratulations and best wishes to SBMA!

Mabuhay!

PETER B. FAVILA
Secretary

MANILA
November 2007

SUBIC-CLARK ALLIANCE FOR DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

MESSAGE

Congratulations on your 15th anniversary!

Over the past 15 years, we have witnessed the dramatic transformation of this former US naval base into a world-class one-stop investment and tourist destination. Now one of the booming economies in North Luzon, Subic is a key component towards the development of the economic hub that Her Excellency President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo is pursuing.

Today is not only a commemoration of its historic turnover to the Philippine Government but it is also a celebration of the Zambaleños' altruistic spirit of volunteerism. Built and established through the unselfish and courageous labor of volunteers, Subic Bay Freeport is a dynamic testimony that the Filipinos, like gold in furnace, would rise above adversities.

With this distinctive quality, I am optimistic that Subic will be able to compete with other major ports in the Asia-Pacific region. In a few years, we will witness the emergence of a mega-logistics hub.

We are looking forward to another blessed and productive year for Subic as we become partners in pursuing national development!

Mabuhay!

SEC. EDGARDO D. PAMINTUAN
Chairman

November 2007

A MANDATE FOR THE FUTURE

A couple of meters away rises another modern-day monument in Subic – that of the Children of the Sun Returning, which was built in 1996 by the first chairman and administrator of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA), then Mayor Richard J. Gordon, and dedicated to Subic volunteers.

Right in the middle of the statues of Inang Laya and Children of the Sun Retuning is a common iconic image of Subic today – the 90-feet flagpole, representing 90 years of American presence in Subic, and on which was hoisted for the first time during the 1992 formal turnover of the naval station, the largest Philippine national flag of its time.

Today, Senator Gordon is credited for making Subic the birthplace of Filipino volunteerism and for awakening the concept of the common good in his fellow Olongapeños and young Filipino idealists from Metro Manila and other places.

Among the young men and women who responded to Gordon's call for volunteers is SBMA's present administrator and chief executive officer, Armand C. Arreza, who together with SBMA Chairman Feliciano G. Salonga, is making Subic Bay Freeport a resounding success.

Then a young college student from Ateneo, Arreza worked as a volunteer in Subic from 1992 to 1994.

Subic's silent heroes and living relics

Another contemporary but equally notable testament to Subic's recent past towers across the lagoon at The Bicentennial Park – the Volunteers' Shrine where engraved on stone are the names of thousands of men and women whose sense of malasakit and indomitable spirit have rebuilt Subic from the ashes of Mt. Pinatubo.

Starkly simple yet profoundly significant, the shrine poignantly recounts not just another episode in Subic's history but a thousand heroes' tale.

Today these men and women are living relics of Subic Bay's shining moment. But unlike fragments of a past that have vanished or been destroyed, their love for Subic – and everything in it – has remained unchanged by the passing of years. To this very day, it binds them together like comrades in arms, silent heroes and veterans of a war against the unpredictable and unknown.

For them, SBMA observes Volunteers' Day every November 24.

Still there exists in Subic another living relic of the past – our brother and sister Aytas whose ancestors have called Subic their home - way, way ahead of the coming of Spanish armadas and American battleships.

Like Subic volunteers, their love for the land – which the Spaniards called Hubek and the same land, which the Americans eventually referred to as Subic – has kept them bound to it.

To the soul and spirit of the katutubo belong Subic's lush mountains and canopied forests, its grand trees and varied wildlife. Whether scantily clad in their native g-strings or garbed in modern-day wear, theirs is an enviable oneness with every natural element of Subic whose voice and every whisper they hear and heed.

For centuries, the Aytas of Subic have survived the harshness of both nature and man. Literally and figuratively, they have stood their ground – braving the onslaught of drought and monsoon rains, and the advent of white faces and conquering forces.

To these living relics of Subic's not so distant past, as well as its more ancient times – the countless volunteers and the Aytas – SBMA dedicates the 15th anniversary of the turnover of Subic to the Philippine government.

In the same way that cannons protected Subic in the past, so did Subic volunteers protect an even more precious part of Subic Bay – the spirit of malasakit or volunteerism, which transformed the former U.S. naval base into a showcase of Philippine commerce, trade and tourism.

Today this same spirit is what the present SBMA leadership strives to renew among its employees – this time, as a core value embedded in SBMA's charter statement and corporate philosophy.

Similarly, the native Aytas of Subic continue to protect a priceless treasure within Subic Bay – the natural landscape upon which now stands one of the country's leading investment and tourism destinations.

Within this same landscape, Subic's past and present have been carved and so will its future.

To both Subic's volunteers and Aytas belongs a most glorious chapter in Subic Bay's history. For their sake and the sake of future generations, those who now benefit from their past toils and sacrifices, their love and passion for Subic, ought to do no less.

This is what Subic's past has bequeathed. This is what the future dictates. (30)

BYE BYE JOE!
On November 24, 1992, the last American contingent left Subic Bay aboard the USS Belleauwood, ending 94 years of U.S. military presence in the Philippines. For the first time, the Philippine flag flew alone over Subic Bay. Some 3,000 volunteers set forth to preserve, protect and manage some US$8 billion worth of infrastructure left by the Americans in Subic Bay.

A RISING ECONOMIC GROWTH AREA
In 1993, the first investors of Subic Bay set up shop. Coastal Petroleum, Enron and Federal Express. In 1995, FedEx inaugurated its regional hub at the Subic Bay International Airport. In 1996, Subic Bay hosted the APEC Leader's Summit, an opportunity that gave the country a chance to showcase Subic Bay as a rising invesiment and tourism hub of the Philippines.

REVIVING SUBIC BAY'S STATUS AS A STRATEGIC ASIAN PORT
In 2000, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) presented the Subic Bay Port Development Plan. Subic Bay's first gantry crane was installed. On the same year, the SBMA and the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) signed a 16.5 Billion yen loan package to bankroll the port development plan

THE SUBIC BAY PORT DEVELOPMENT PROJECT
In 2004, SBMA led the groundbreaking of the Subic Bay container port project. Two years later, four gantry cranes were installed at the port development site, increasing its capacity to 600,000 TEUs.

A REVITALIZED VISION FOR SUBIC BAY
In 2006, the SBMA, under the leadership of Commodore Feliciano G. Salonga as SBMA Chairman, and Administrator Armand C. Arreza, refocused the Authority's vision into developing the Subic Bay Freeport Zone as a Maritime hub of the region

SUBIC BAY FREEPORT AS A SHIPBUILDING HUB
Korea's Hanjin Heavy Industries, the world's second largest shipbuilding company, invests US$1.684 B for the construction of a shipyard at the Redondo Peninsula that is projected to generate 30,000 direct and indirect jobs.

LOOKING AHEAD
The Subic Drydock returns to the Freeport in 2007, after 15 years. In the same year, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo inaugurates the NSD Container Terminal 1 (NCT1), constructed under the Port Development Project.

20th PHILIPPINE ADVERTISING CONGRESS
The Subic Bay Exhibition and Convention Center - a former computer factory converted into a convention facility – debuts in November as venue of the 20th Advertising Congress, dubbed by AdCon officials as "record breaking" with an attendance of close to 4,000 members of the advertising and media industries.

Subic draws biggest Ad Congress crowd

Subic's proximity to Manila and other urban centers in Luzon, as well as the excellent business and leisure facilities here, combined to attract the biggest number of delegates in the history of the Philippine Advertising Congress (PAC).

PAC organizers said delegates to the 20th Ad Congress held November 21-24 at the Subic Bay Exhibition and Convention Center (SBECC) reached a total of 3,423, topping records set in other venues like Manila, Cebu, Davao and Baguio City.

The previous congress, which was held in Cebu, recorded only 2,600 delegates, said Boy Pangilinan, the 20th Ad Congress chief of staff.

Most of the delegates from Metro Manila and nearby provinces in Central Luzon said Subic is an ideal venue for national conferences or trade shows because of its accessibility.

"Subic is a lot closer and you won't have to pay for air fare to get here," said Joy Franklin, who publishes a community newspaper in Tarlac.

Franklin, who paid P19,000 to attend the conference as a non-member delegate, added that he would have missed the convention if it was held in another place like Cebu or Davao.

"Just think of the savings you get when the venue is accessible," Franklin added. "With the savings you get, you can also afford to enjoy the other tourism attractions that Subic is famous for."

Organizers also said that popular international speakers invited for a series of lectures and discussions during the Ad Congress also helped market the event.

"This is the first Ad Congress that has more than 20 speakers, and the scheduled sessions are the most interesting yet," said Ad Congress chairperson Yoly Villanueva-Ong.

The speakers included "Stardust" author Neil Gaiman, who talked on "Imagination and Creativity in the Contemporary World"; Derek Callow, regional marketing manager for Google Southeast Asia, and businessman John Gokongwei Jr., chairman of JG Summit Holdings, one of the biggest business conglomerates in the Philippines today.

Delegates who liked to mix business with pleasure also said Subic's sports and leisure facilities also played up the freeport's attractiveness as a conference venue.

The Ad Congress schedule included a golf tournament for delegates, an Amazing Race-styled activity with 10 pit stops, kart racing at the slalom track near the Subic airport, all-doubles tournament at the sports gym, and a dodgeball event at the Subic Boardwalk Park.

SUBIC BAY METROPOLITAN AUTHORITY
ZAMBALES

MESSAGE

Subic, a virtual wasteland after the 1991 eruption of Mt. Pinatubo, is now acknowledged as one of the country's top investment and tourism sites. Its rise in the last 15 years is something short of phenomenal, if not, phenomenal itself.

We attribute a great part of Subic's early success to our predecessors and the thousands of volunteers who have lifted it from devastation to growth.

Today, we have begun the effort of bringing Subic Bay Freeport at the cutting edge of select maritime-related industries. We have also shifted our focus to those industries and investments related to education, logistics, health, tourism and retirement. This we are determined to do as the creation of the Subic-Clark growth corridor has, in effect, expanded our mandate as an economic driver in Central Luzon.

With the continued support of Her Excellency, President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo who envisions the corridor as the most competitive logistics and service hub in East Asia, turning this vision into reality will simply be a matter of time.

As we mark the 15th anniversary of Subic Bay Freeport, therefore, our greatest challenge is to outdo ourselves in the task of generating gainful employment and contributing to the sustainable development of the region.

Given the way Subic has not only survived but also evolved through the years and thrived amidst adversity, we are confident of achieving, or even exceeding, our goals.

To the men and women of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority, our 70,000-strong workforce and more than 800 locators, I say full speed ahead!

COMMO. FELICIANO G. SALONGA
Chairman/Head of Agency

SUBIC BAY
November 2007

SUBIC BAY METROPOLITAN AUTHORITY
ZAMBALES

MESSAGE

My congratulations and thanks to all the employees and officials of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority as we celebrate the 15th year anniversary of our organization.

It is, without doubt, our collective effort at nurturing the spirit of cooperation and *malasakit* that has propelled the SBMA onwards since its founding in 1992. And it is, unarguably, by keeping faith with the vision that Subic can make a difference in the lives of Filipinos in the Subic Bay area that we have come to the present opportunity to change lives even beyond the boundaries of the Subic Bay Freeport.

We have arrived, 15 years later, at a critical juncture in the history of the SBMA—when what we do today would spell a big difference to the coming generations. We are, at this point, in the process of creating a new Subic that could send ripples across the broad spectrum of the economy and the society. And we cannot fail in this task.

Indeed, so much would now depend on the hands of the men and women behind SBMA. In the past, we have kept the faith; in the future, we have to continue proving that this faith works. And that it produces positive results abundantly.

Mabuhay po tayong lahat!

ARMAND C. ARREZA
Administrator and CEO

SUBIC BAY
November 2007

People, Events & Products

E-mail: pr_pep@inquirer.com.ph
aespinosa@inquirer.com.ph

Editor **Aries Espinosa**

SM awarded as the Philippines Top Retailer by Retail Asia

SM WAS NAMED THE PHILIPPINES TOP Retailer during the recent Retail Asia Top 500 Awards held in Tokyo, Japan. This is the fourth straight year in which SM was cited by this prestigious regional trade magazine, which honored top retailers from 14 economies.

"All our award winners are in many ways the crème dela crème companies of the region," says Steven HL Goh, executive chair of Singapore based Retail Asia Publishing PTE Ltd." We assure they embody the many great attributes of best practices and success drivers in retailing. We hope that they could in one way or another provide a source of inspiration for the many growing retail companies, big and small, across the Asia-Pacific region."

Other recipients of the Gold Award were Australia's Woolworths Limited, China's Gome Elecrical Appliances, Hongkong's The Dairy Farm Group. India's Pantaloon Retail, Indonesia's Matahari, Japan's Seven and I Holding, and Malaysia's GCH Retail. New Zealand's Foodstuff, Singapore's Dairy Farm, South Korea's Lotte Shopping, Taiwan's President Chain Store, Thailand's CP Seven Eleven, and Vietnam's Saigon Co. op were also in the list of star performers.

With its new directions to become a customer driven and result oriented company that focuses on teamwork and the entrepreneurial spirit, SM's Department Store chain is currently undertaking renovation works on its major stores to enhance the shopping experience.

We constantly innovate to give our customers in-store services beyond their shopping needs," says SM Inc president Teresita Sy-Coson.

New innovations in store design will be evident in the stores at the SM Supermalls in North Edsa, Megamall, and Bacoor. The new design of the Megamall store departs from the usual mass merchandise set-up, targeting more upscale customers by offering better brands with emphasis on retail excitement.

The new design seeks to create a more relaxed shopping environment, mixing attitude and practicality. Color and lighting are used to create shopping choreography to guide customers around the store. The shopping environment uses very little color in the overall interiors, but splashes of color guide the customer's eye with surprises throughout the store.

The SM Malls' expansion program this year will again provide store space to the department store and the rest of the retail group allowing it to expand aggressively. SM City Bacolod opened early this year in the southern Philippines, and the malls, SM City Taytay and The SM Supercenter in Muntinlupa which was recently opened.

To date, SM has 31 department stores, 29 supermarkets, 9 hypermarkets 37 appliance centers, 17 home stores 20 toy superstores, 31 fashion discount stores, 14 sports stores, two baby specialty stores, and four stores showcasing Philippines products.

SM Also has 34 ACE Hardware stores, a franchise of US Base ACE Hardware; and 169 Watsons stores, a joint ventures with the Hutchison-Whampoa Group of Hongkong. Marionnaud, an upscale cosmetics store affiliated with the AS Watsons Group, opened its first store at Mall of Asia last year.

Awards Ceremony & G
Star Re ers of
11 Oct
wider

SM was recently honored with the Gold Award as the Philippines Top Retailer during the annual Retail Asia-Pacific Top 500 Awards held in Tokyo, Japan. Top ranking retailers from 14 economies were cited by this prestigious regional trade magazine during the awarding ceremonies. Shown in photo is SM Department Store senior vice president Jorge Mendiola receiving the award from Kazuhiko Okamoto, deputy general manager of Visa Japan.

BFSB HOLDS QUARTERLY LUNCH WITH THE COACH

BPI Family Savings Bank (BFSB) recently held its quarterly Lunch with the Coach at Café Havana in Greenbelt 3, Makati City. Now on its fourth year, Lunch with the Coach is one of BFSB's way of showing its appreciation and gratitude to top performing brokers who refer successful housing loan bookings to the bank. For Q3 of 2007, eight top brokers were treated to a sumptuous lunch and were presented with special tokens by BFSB president Alfonso Salcedo Jr (seated 2nd from left). Also in photo with Salcedo are (seated from left) BFSB vice president Jocelyn Sta. Ana, Josephine Gaston, Lizbeth del Rosario and Christine Joy Sangalang; (standing from left) Timothy Leung, BFSB AVP Ruel Magtoto, Marissa Garcia, Raquel Gabriel, Rowena Ganebo and Carol Untalan.

RICOH PHILIPPINES IN CENTRAL MAKATI DISTRICT

Ricoh Philippines opened its new office and showroom located at Buendia Avenue in Makati. Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay (center) led the ribbon cutting ceremonies assisted by (second from right) Ricoh Asia Pacific chair Nobuaki Majima and (extreme right) Ricoh Phils president Manuel S. Peralta. Other Ricoh officers present were (from left) August Cruz, sales and distribution manager and Aileen Gallardo, chief finance officer.

ATENEO ASPIRANTS FOOTBALL TEAM WINS IN RIFA

The Ateneo Aspirants Football Team recently won this year's Rizal Football Association (Rifa) Tournament beating Southridge Int'l School 5-3 via shootout, after the regulation period ended tied 2-2. A solid block by goalkeeper Paolo Mendoza and the succeeding goal of Luigi Manalang clinched the game for Ateneo. Members of the victorious team are (front row, from left): Allen Hizon, Alfonso Tinio, Francis Yu, Andrew Abaya, Miko Mabanag, Jose Montelibano, and Gino Cariño. (2nd row, from left) coach Ompong Merida, Luis Mendoza, Luigi Manalang, Wilson Marcelino, Gabe Manalo, Sang Yoon Kim, Paolo Mendoza, Dan Guzman, Aji Oppus, Miguel Manalang, Nito Alleje and Jaggy Gangat.

Top women's group eyeing RP's health hubs for Japanese seniors

JAPAN'S MOST INFLUENTIAL women citizens' group has visited the Philippines for prospects of bringing in Japanese seniors for care and treatment in the country's health and wellness facilities.

The 4-day visit by officers and members of the Women's Association for Better Aging Society was facilitated by Team Japan of the Department of Tourism (DOT), heeding the call of Tourism Secretary Joseph Ace Durano for all marketing teams to intensify promoting the country's health, wellness, and medical tourism worldwide.

The DOT Team Japan welcomed and brought the group to various health and wellness destinations, including St. Luke's Medical Center in Quezon City and Tagaytay Highlands in Cavite.

DOT Team Japan head director Benito C. Bengzon Jr and product research and development director Elizabeth Nelle briefed the group on the Philippines' medical and health facilities and services that could meet their needs.

Also at hand was a representative from the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (Tesda) who discussed the quality of the country's caregiver curriculum since the Japanese group was also eyeing prospects of bringing Filipino caregivers to Japan.

The huge aging population in Japan and the rest of the world presents vast opportunities for the country's health and wellness facilities and destinations, including spa and medical tourism, apparently prompting Durano to swiftly position the Philippines as "Islands of Wellness" in the international tourism market.

This forward-looking market positioning tack got a boost from President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo who timely declared October as "Health and Wellness Tourism Month."

In inviting participants to the recently concluded Spa Asia Summit in Manila, Durano said the dramatic growth of the industry in the past few years inspired the government to invest significantly in its further development.

The move all the more triggered private sector investments in many new establishments with modern and artistically-designed spa and wellness facilities mushrooming across the archipelago and becoming major tourist attractions themselves.

The strategy, not only broadened the industry, but also increased tourism capacity and enhanced the Philippine image as a multi-dimensional destination with a specific niche in every foreign market.

In Japan, for example, "health and wellness" has been gracefully integrated into the Philippines' brand image through the campaign "Wellness from the Inside Out".

While the campaign is specifically targeted at the wide female segment of the Japanese market, it has also set the groundwork for promoting the Philippines as a medical tourism hub and added a new dimension to the country's "Premium Resort Islands Philippines" brand.

The campaign is now generating Japanese demand for health and wellness package tours to the Philippines.

At the same time, traditional Filipino massage therapy hilot is getting popular in Japan.

"There is now a 'Cebu Hilot' spa in Nanja town, Sunshine City, Ikebukuro, Tokyo," Bengzon said.

ProductFILES

3 easy steps to a thicker and healthier hair

HEALTHY-LOOKING HAIR BEGINS WITH THE scalp. In reality, hair loss does occur for other reasons which you can have control over if you know how to keep the scalp nourished and protected at all times. For most people, their hair is their crowning glory, their most valuable asset next to the face, therefore it is a bit alarming if the situation turns out to be a "bad hair day" for them. At this point, if it looks like they are losing their hair, they hit the panic button right away to search for traditional and alternative solutions which are often costly and ineffective in the long run. In extreme cases, hair loss becomes permanent though it's never too late to start growing back your thinning hair to its once, full and thicker state. All you need is a good start. Nioxin Thinning Hair Systems is a 3-part system that neutralizes the common causes of hair loss. Primarily developed for the consumers' well-being, Nioxin personalized scalp care systems revolutionizes hair care technology by providing an optimal and ideal scalp environment to achieve the much desired hair thickening effect utilizing a comprehensive yet no-fuss approach, to end all your "bad hair days" for good. Each step taken is vital, as it does all the wonders for your hair, creating an optimum scalp environment ideal for hair thickening and growth. Step 1- Cleanse. Nioxin Cleanser gently remove toxins, environ mental residue and Dihydrotestosterone (DHT) from the hair to promote a healthier scalp environment. Step 2 - Moisturize. Nioxin Scalp Therapy Deeply conditions as it energizes the scalp using the most soothing essential oils, special antioxidants and enzymatic complexes. Step 3 - Nourish. Nioxin Scalp Treatment Daily treatment delivers essential botanicals and nutrients to the scalp to help safeguard against environmental residue build-up on the scalp. To maximize the desired results, use Nioxin styling products after these steps. To further bolster its claims, an independent market research study has been conducted recently among loyal consumers and later revealed that 9 out of 10 respondents who earlier perceived themselves as noticeably thinning, have noticed a remarkable increase in hair density, a thickening effect, and better moisture control upon usage of the entire Nioxin 3-step regimen. All Nioxin products are manufactured in the USA by Nioxin Research Laboratories Inc and are now available at all leading department stores and beauty bars. In the Philippines, Beauty Concepts Inc holds the exclusive distribution rights of all Nioxin System products. For sales inquiries, contact 725-7918 to 20 or e-mail: beautycon@pldtds.net. For more product information, visit www.nioxin.com.

BITS & Clips

Sun Cellular's IDD Top 10 Service

SUN CELLULAR PROVIDES YOU THE BEST OPPORTUNITY TO STAY IN touch with the people who matter most to you at very affordable rates. With Sun's IDD Top 10, you can call your loved ones and friends in 10 overseas destinations including mainland USA, China, Hong Kong, Canada, Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia, Brunei, Guam, and Macau at an incredibly low rate of only $0.10 per minute. If you are a Sun Cellular postpaid subscriber wanting to avail yourself of this service, just dial "200" on your Sun mobile phone or visit the nearest Sun Shop. And if you are a prepaid subscriber, you can enjoy this service by buying a Sun IDD Top 10 call card from the Sun Shop or your favorite retail outlet or via e-Pin, Xpress Load or SMS purchase through The Mall. A P100 IDD Top 10 load will provide approximately 20 minutes of IDD talk time with a validity period of 30 days. In this age of electronic mail and text messaging, a call would truly be more special for your dear ones abroad. Call them now using Sun Cellular's IDD Top 10 service. For calls outside the Sun IDD Top 10 destinations, use Sun's Regular IDD Service for only US$ 0.30/minute. This service allows users to call over 200 international destinations without operator assistance and at the lowest regular cellphone rate in the Philippines. For more information, visit www.suncellular.com.ph or call the Sun Cellular Hotline 200 or 395-8000.

'Pamaskong Handog ng Kabayan': All geared to take center stage

THE PROVERBIAL RED CARPET HAS STARTED TO ROLL OUT IN SPRAWLING SM BATANGAS CITY for the staging of a weekend Christmas bazaar dubbed "Pamaskong Handog ng Kabayan", one of the highlights of several events lined up for the 50th Anniversary of leading Batangas-based Bangko Kabayan come Dec. 8 and 9. A first-of-its-kind activity the bank could offer to its over 8,000 microfinance loan clients, the tiangge is designed to provide a weekend of solidarity while presenting various skills seminars during the day and a variety show and grand raffle draw in the evening. Open for the general public, the two-day bazaar will feature a total of 80 booths-70 of which are intended for the exhibition and selling of pre-approved food and handicraft items of the bank's microfinance clients from both Kabayan (individual) and Kapitan (group) centers as well as SBE patrons, while 10 for sponsors. Given the various activities lined up plus the strategic location of SM Batangas City, an expected 10,000 participants will patronize the two day bazaar, including luminaries invited to grace the event from the local government, the Bank's partners and showbiz personality Ogie Alcasid. "Pamaskong Handog ng Kabayan" is sponsored by Globe, SM Batangas City, official radio partner Spirit FM, Petnet and Prudential. For inquiries, call at (043)311-1420, (043)311-1323, (043)311-1303, (043)311-1814; or log on to www.bangkokabayan.com.

VSO Bahaginan holds 'Be a Kabahagi Cup' golf for a cause

FIGHTING POVERTY IS SOMETHING THAT CONCERNS EACH AND EVERYONE OF US. EVERY SINGLE step brings us closer to achieving that goal. Organizations like the VSO (Voluntary Service Overseas) Bahaginan understands only too well the need for people to take the first step and act. Thus, VSO Bahaginan is conducting its first "Be a Kabahagi Cup," a golf tournament for a cause, slated on Dec. 4, at the Ayala Greenfield Estates, Calamba, Laguna. The Ayala Greenfield Estates is one of the sponsors of the golf tournament. The invitation is open to all golf enthusiasts and anyone interested in the said activity. The day-long activity will consist of the golf tournament, raffle draws, and the awarding ceremony. Raffle prizes include trips to Palawan, Boracay and Cebu sponsored by Metro Travel and Hyatt Hotel and Casino Manila, to name a few. Winners of the tournament will bring home trophies and other fun prizes. VSO Bahaginan is a development organization committed to fighting global poverty and disadvantage through a wide range of volunteer development programmes. It is a member of the VSO (Voluntary Service Overseas) Federation, an international development organization that works through volunteers. It promotes volunteering to fight global poverty, by supporting people to share skills, creativity and learning with communities around the world. Through personal commitment and practical action, volunteers help build a fairer world. The Kabahagi Cup is one of the kick-off activities that signals VSO's 50th Anniversary Campaign in 2008. For more information, contact Mark Anthony Dasco at 274-6450 to 52 or at 0917-807-8455.

Application for Jenesys Programme opens

THE NATIONAL YOUTH COMMISSION IS INVITING APPLICANTS FOR STUDENT AMBASSADORS TO the Japan-East Asia Network of Exchange for Students and Youths (Jenesys) Programme. There will be 2 batches of 100 delegates per batch that will be sent to Japan: 1st batch for May 13-22, 2008 and 2nd batch for May 20-29, 2008. Qualifications: Filipino, single, must be between 16 to 18 years old on or before April 1, 2008; Of good moral character; Currently enrolled in a school, college or university with a GWA of 2.25 or 85 percent equivalent, with no failing marks in the preceding semester; Physically and mentally fit to travel; Must be a first time traveler to Japan and or must not have been a grantee or recipient of any NYC funded international travel or Japanese Government grant; Must be knowledgeable of the history, geography, culture and arts, and the current issues on the Philippines, and fairly knowledgeable on Japan issues as well as those of other East Asian countries; Must be an officer or an active member of a youth organization for at least 1 year immediately preceding the date of application; Must be willing to become an active NYC volunteer after the program to be covered by an appropriate MOA and to continue to promote the learnings about Japan and the Japanese cultures gained from the Jenesys Programme; Area representation would be based on the place of the school, college, or university enrolled in. Application requirements: 2 copies of the Application Form with passport-sized photos with white background attached to each form (all original, no scanned photos); 2 copies of resume', not more than 3 pages; 2 copies of certificate of GMC, issued by the school, college or university (1 original and 1 photocopy); 2 copies of certified true copy of grades; 2 copies of Police or NBI clearance; 4 copies of passport-sized photos (not scanned photos); Completed NYC Volunteers' Application Form. Application forms for the Jenesys Programme and the NYC Volunteers' Application Forms may be downloaded from the NYC website at www.youth.net.ph. Completed application forms may be submitted to Marielou A. Chua of the Jenesys Programme Secretariat at the National Youth Commission, 4/F, Bookman Building, 373 Quezon Ave, QC. Deadline for submission is on or before 5 p.m. of Dec. 31. For applications submitted through the mail or by courier, the Secretariat should receive the application forms and other requirements post marked before Jan. 1, 2008. Application forms with incomplete requirements shall automatically be disqualified.

Philippine Amusement & Gaming Corporation
A Global Corporation with a Global Mindset and a Filipino Heart

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

ITB NO.: 11-05-2007 BAC

The Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation (PAGCOR) is inviting all interested bidders in its forthcoming public bidding for the project stated hereunder:

Name of Project : One (1) Lot 2-year Janitorial Services for PAGCOR-Bacolod
Approved Budget : Five Million Six Hundred Sixty Four Thousand Eight Hundred Twenty Two Pesos and 48/100 (Php5,664,822.48)
Contract Duration : Two (2) years
Source of Fund : Internally Funded

Only suppliers duly registered with PAGCOR shall be allowed to participate in the bidding. Unregistered suppliers must register at the Suppliers Registration & Evaluation Section (SRES), Procurement & Property Department (PPD), 2nd Floor PAGCOR House, 1330 Roxas Blvd., Ermita, Manila, Tel. No. 526-0573 or at the Branch Procurement and Property Office (BPPO), Casino Filipino Hotel and Casino, Goldfield Commercial Complex, Singcang, Bacolod City (034) 434-8912.

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Pre-Bid Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

The schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

Activities	*Schedule*
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	November 23, 2007 – December 14, 2007
2. Pre-Bid Conference	November 29, 2007 (2:00 pm)
3. Submission of Bids	December 15, 2007 (2:00 pm)
4. Opening of Bids	December 15, 2007 (2:00 pm onwards)

Venue : PAGCOR Bacolod

Complete details of the project are indicated in the bid documents which will be available to prospective bidders at the BBAC Secretariat Office, Branch Procurement and Property Office, Casino Filipino Hotel and Casino, Goldfield Commercial Complex, Singcang, Bacolod City upon payment of a non-refundable bidding fee of ***One Thousand Four Hundred Sixteen Pesos & 20/100 (Php1,416.20)***. In order to secure the documents, bidders should present the Official Receipt issued by our Cashier to the BBAC Secretariat.

PAGCOR assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of their bids.

PAGCOR reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

Please address all communications to the BBAC Secretariat Unit, Branch Procurement and Property Office (BPPO), Casino Filipino Hotel and Casino, Goldfield Commercial Complex, Singcang, Bacolod City (034) 434-8912.

(Sgd.) **ELIZER O. TORRES**
Chairperson, BBAC Bacolod

(PDI–Nov. 24, 2007)

ZAMBOANGA CITY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
(ZAMCELCO)
Zamboanga City

INVITATION TO BID

The Zamboanga City Electric Cooperative, Inc. (ZAMCELCO) at Putik, this city per requisite under Board Policies on Pre-Qualifications, and Bids and Awards invites ALL interested Bidders/Suppliers to bid for the supply of the following electrical materials/equipment/items, to wit:

No.	Quantity	Unit	Item Description
1	25	DRUMS	TRANSFORMER OIL DIALA-A FOR REPLACEMENT OF TRANSFORMER OIL OF P29,000.00 PER DRUM 5MVA NEW KOREA PULLED OUT FROM AYALA S/S

You may secure the Pre-qualification Requirements from the office of the Finance Department, ZAMCELCO Complex in Putik, this city anytime during office hours and submit the same upon completion of all requirements thereof.

Submission of the Pre-qualification Requirements shall not be later than 5:00 p.m. of **November 24, 2007** and no documents appertaining thereto, shall be accepted thereafter.

All applicants will be duly notified as to the results of the pre-qualification eligibility process. Only those who are pre-qualified will be allowed to participate in the bidding. A post-qualification may be conducted accordingly hereafter.

Bidding will be conducted on **November 27, 2007.**

Sealed bid in duplicate copies should be submitted to the Committee on Bids and Awards at the Office of the Finance Department at the above-mentioned address on or before 2:00 p.m. of **November 27, 2007.** Five percent (5%) Bidder's Bond is required as a matter of policy.

The right to reject any or all bids, to waive any formality therein, or to accept such bid as may be considered advantageous to the coop is hereby reserved as an absolute prerogative of ZAMCELCO.

(Sgd.) **REINERIO R. RAMOS**
General Manager

(PDI - Nov. 23 & 24, 2007)

Due to anticipated school growth and expansion for school year 2008-2009, our school is now looking for teachers in English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Filipino, CLE and MAPEH.

He/She should have the following qualifications:

- A graduate of BSEEd or BSE-Secondary Education from a reputable school
- Preferably a LET Passer
- Must be of good moral character
- Must be proficient in English and Filipino
- Must have a pleasant personality

Fresh graduates who will take the LET for school year 2008-2009 are welcome to apply. You may send your resumé with your Transcript of Records or personally handcarry these to:

MAGIS ACADEMY
#10 Tindalo St., Town & Country Executive Village
Marcos Highway
Tel. Nos. 249-09-17 & 249-09-19
Look for : Mrs. Cecilia S. Lavilles

Intramuros Administration

INVITATION FOR THE SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF ADOBE BLOCKS AND TILES FOR MAESTRANZA PROJECT

LOCATION : *Andres Soriano, Jr. Ave. (formerly Aduana Street)*
Intramuros, Manila

SPECIFICATIONS :

		ADOBE BLOCKS (Bulk Type)	ADOBE TILES	BRICKS
Quantity	:	9,000 pcs.	90,000 pcs.	320,000 pcs.
Size	:	0.25m x 0.40m x 0.80m	0.075m x 0.50m x 0.80m	1 ½" x 5" x 10"
Quantity	:	90,000 pcs.		
Size	:	0.50m x 0.50m x 0.80m		

Schedule of Delivery : *Per proposal of the supplier preferably one (1) year*

Interested parties are required to submit Letter of Intent (LOI) with costing on or before *November 28, 2007* at Urban Planning and Community Development Division.

Contact person: ***Engr. Victor B. Reyes***, tel. no. 5272811 or 5270420.

(Sgd.) Usec. Phineas Alburo
Undersecretary for Special Concerns

5th Floor, Palacio del Gobernador
Corner General Luna & Aduana Sts., Intramuros, Manila

(PDI–Nov. 24, 2007)

➢ LOOKING FOR A MECH/ELECT ENGINEER

- Male, Filipino or Chinese speaking
- Willing to travel to province.
- New grad or w/ experience 25-40 yrs. old

➢ LOOKING ALSO FOR SALES AGENT

- Male/female new grad or w/ experience
- 25-40 yrs. old, Filipino or Chinese speaking

Submit resumé to:
917 Susano Avenue,
Novaliches, Q.C.
or rwc_fpc2@yahoo.com

OFFICE ASSISTANT

- Female; 20-25 years old
- College graduate
- Good oral and written English
- Personable with pleasing personality
- Hard-working, resourceful and highly organized

Email resumé with recent ID photo to:
frontdoor@dyll.biz
Dyll Communications, Inc.

Dr. Manolito Syjueco Gozon

September 18, 1936 - November 16, 2007

peacefully joined our Creator on November 16, 2007 at the age of 71.

*His loving wife Ester, loving daughters and sons-in-law, **Lulut and Joey, Marcia and Alan, Liza and Pacoy, Mayose and Jay, Tina and Frank**, loving son **Noel**,† grandchildren **Frances, Kenneth, Justine, Nikki, Jules, Martin, Kate, Matthew, Cheenie, Lance, Jacq, and Kirsten**, relatives and friends deeply mourn his untimely demise and request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.*

*His remains lie in state at the **Gozon Ancestral Home**, 726 Rizal Avenue, Tañong, Malabon City.*

*Interment will be on November 28, 2007, Wednesday, at **Tugatog Cemetery**, Malabon City after the 1:00 pm Funeral Mass concelebrated by Bishops, Diocesan and Religious Clergy at the San Bartolome Parish.*

*In lieu of flowers, donations to the **Noel P. Gozon Medical Clinic** would be appreciated.*

Death Notice

DR. JAIME ERNESTO B. BASA

March 6, 1960 - Nov. 12, 2007

His body lies at Chapel Gumamela, 3F Sanctuarium, Araneta Ave., Quezon City. Viewing is on Nov. 23 to 26. There will be an 8 p.m Mass on Nov. 23; 7:30 p.m. on Nov. 24; and 5 p.m. on Nov. 25.

Interment will be on Nov. 27, 2007 at Himlayang Pilipino, Tandang Sora, Quezon City.

"...absent from the body to be present with the Lord."
2 Corinthians 5:8

> *"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith."*
> *2 Timothy 4:7*

ELISA NADYA E. GAMO

Now peacefully rests in the infinite grace and goodness of the Lord on the 21st day of November, 2007 at the age of 58.

She will be missed by her loving mother, **Leonila Encarnacion**; husband **Edgardo**; children **Edgardo Jr. & Hellanor**, **Emil Roberto & Monalisa**, **Edison Michael & Whitney**, grandchildren; **Angela Marie & Angelo Gabriel**; & other relatives, friends, nurses, **Beth & Rose**.

Her cremated remains will be viewed in state at the Garden Suite, Loyola Memorial Chapel, Guadalupe, Makati City from the 21st until the 22nd day of November 2007. She will then be transferred for viewing at her residence at #10 Don Manuel St. Vesco Subdivision, San Pablo City, Laguna from 2:00 pm of 22nd until 12:00 noon of the 24th of November, 2007.

"Love does not die – people do. So when all that's left of me is love, give me away,
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NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that GOLDEN SWAN PAPER PRODUCTS CORPORATION is applying for registration with the Board of Investments (BOI) as New Producer of Kraft Linerboard and Corrugating Medium on a Non-Pioneer Status with capacity of 26,208 MTPY (Kraft Linerboard) and 11,232 MTPY (Corrugating Medium) with project/plant site located at Mountview Ind. Park-Annex, Gov. Drive, Carmona, Cavite City.

Any person with valid objection/s on the above-mentioned project may file his/her objection in writing, under oath, with the BOI within three (3) days from the date of this publication.

(Sgd.) **RUDY B. CAÑA**
Director
Project Evaluation and
Registration Department

(PDI - Nov. 24, 2007)

ILOCOS NORTE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
Suyo, Dingras, Ilocos Norte 2913
TIN 000-716-369 V
Tel. No. (077) 784-71-26/784-00-82 Local 818 Fax No. 784-71-25

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND BID

The Ilocos Norte Electric Cooperative, Inc. (INEC) invites all interested computer suppliers to participate in a public bidding for the supply and delivery of computer servers on Lease Basis.

A. Computer Server Specifications

Quantity - 1 set
Brand and Model : Hewlett Packard ML370 G5
Processor Type : Intel® Xeon® 5060 Quad-Core Processor 1.86 GHz 1066 MHz Front Side Bus
Number of processors : 2 Processors
Standard Memory : memory card; 4GB (2 x 2GB 2-5300 Fully Buffered DIMMs DDR2-667 SDRAM running at 533MHz, with Advanced ECC, Online Spare and Mirroring
Memory slots : 8 slots per memory card
Internal hard disk drive : 5 Pcs - HP 72 GB 3GB/s 15K rpm SAS SFF SP Hard Disk Drive
Hard disk controller : Smart Array P400 Controller with 256MB cache (RAID 0/1/5)
Internal drive bays : 16, requires second drive cage and controller
Operating Systems : Microsoft Windows® Server 2003 25 CAL

Further, INEC invites all interested computer suppliers to participate in a public bidding for the supply and delivery of line printers.

B. Line Printer Specifications

Quantity - 4 sets
Line Printer
Specs : 500 Lines per minute

Interested bidders shall include After Sales Support in their bid.

Bid documents may be obtained at the BAC Secretariat during office hours from November 28 - December 5, 2007 upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P5,000.00.

All bids must be accompanied by a bid bond in the form of cash or manager's check in the amount equivalent to 2.5% of the total bid price.

The INEC reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason to waive any minor defects or infirmities therein or to accept such bids as maybe considered most advantageous and responsive to the INEC.

(Sgd.) **RODRIGO R. AGLIAM**
BAC Chairman

(Sgd.) **RENATO A. BALINTEC, PEE**
OIC-General Manager

(PDI - Nov. 23 & 24, 2007)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late Adriano S. Adlawan was extrajudicially settled among heirs of personal property with waiver of shares as pers Doc. No. 175, Page No. 35, Book No. XXVII Series of 2007 under Notary Public Atty. Robert Michael A. Natividad of San Mateo Rizal.
(PDI NOV. 18, 24 & 27, 2007)

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Oral vaccine helps prevent Rotavirus

By Tess S. Samaniego

ROTAVIRUS KILLS MORE than dengue and AIDS among children," says Dr. Lulu Bravo, president of the Asian Society for Pediatric Infectious Disease. In fact, Rotavirus is responsible for the more than 4,000 diarrheal deaths among Filipino children.

Rotavirus is the leading cause of severe diarrheal disease and dehydration of infants in both developed and developing countries, with seasonal peaks according to the latitude and climate.

Although it cannot be prevented through mere fluid rehydration and proper hygiene, Bravo stresses that it can be avoided with oral vaccination. (RotaTeq, introduced by Merck Sharp & Dohme in the country in October this year, is a proven protection against Rotavirus.)

In a one-on-one interview with the INQUIRER during the recent Asia-Pacific Rotavirus Metaforum, Bravo explains what Rotavirus is and how it is affecting the Philippines.

Q: Do Filipinos have enough knowledge of Rotavirus?

A: Ever since, we have been telling people about diarrheal diseases. We wanted them to know more about preventing diarrheal dehydration [so] we had promoted the use of oral rehydration, use of electrolytes. But now that there is a Rotavirus vaccine, we are telling people about Rotavirus and the fact that it can be prevented through the vaccine.

We have just started the information campaign about Rotavirus. People 'know about diarrhea but they don't know Rotavirus yet, although some may have heard it from their doctors. Most of the time, doctors do not test for Rotavirus. So what happens is that children are confined for severe diarrhea, not knowing it may have been caused by Rotavirus.

How do you intend to address the lack of knowledge of Filipinos about Rotavirus?

Through education and making sure that doctors are also trained to tell their parents... [and] patients what Rotavirus is all about—that it is a severe type of diarrheal disease that can cause hospitalization and even death when left untreated.

How prevalent is Rotavirus in the Philippines?

It is a very common disease. In fact 90 percent of children get Rotavirus before they reach 2 years of age and almost 100 percent of them will get it before reaching 5 years of age. Usually, the first infection, which occurs most commonly between the age of 6 months and 2 years, is the worst and that's when most children become hospitalized.

Is it only common in slum areas?

No, it's common everywhere. Every child—whether rich or poor, can be exposed to Rotavirus. However, children from rich families can get treatment at once, be hospitalized and would have less risk of dying. But the poor ones who cannot be hospitalized and given treatment properly are the ones at risk of dying.

Is there enough help from the government?

Right now, we do not have resources yet from government to sort of give the vaccine for free since the rotavirus vaccines have not been included in the Extended Program of Immunization (EPI) wherein government gives certain vaccines for free in local health centers.

Do you have future plans for tie-ups with the Philippine government?

We hope there could be some ways to make sure that the government can procure the vaccine or give these for free to people because this is the only way you would know that [the vaccine] has had a big impact to the general population.

What is the significance of the Rotavirus vaccine for the Philippines?

It means we can prevent a lot of deaths from diarrheal disease if we are able to implement Rotavirus vaccine. With the introduction of the Rotavirus vaccine we can get more people to be free of rotaviral disease. The impact could be big just as we feel it now in many of the countries that has introduced the vaccine like the United States and Latin America.

For a Third World country like the Philippines, is there hope that we could combat Rotavirus effectively?

If you cannot put the Rotavirus vaccine in the national immunization program, it would be very difficult [for it] to have a big impact on the whole of the population. We have to make the government realize the value of vaccination. They should put the money where it belongs—to the health of the children. We can save the lives of millions of children if they are given the right vaccine at the right time.

Health is the key to proper economic development. It is the way forward in terms of alleviating poverty and developing economically. If children are free of illnesses, they can be educated well and will be productive. Productivity is another key to economic development.

"Asian countries need to be more proactive. We need to think about the value of vaccines and how we can reduce the morbidity and mortality of our children. Vaccines are investments and economies improve because of vaccines," Dr. Bravo concludes.

Most common cause of infectious diarrhea

"ROTAVIRUS IS THE LEADing cause of severe gastroenteritis in infants and young children less than 5 years of age," said Dr. Dennis Brooks, senior medical director of Merck Sharp and Dohme.

"Worldwide, 25 million children are treated in hospitals and an average of 611,000 deaths is recorded yearly because of Rotavirus," Brooks said in an interview with the INQUIRER.

At the recently concluded Asia-Pacific Rotavirus Metaforum, Brooks explained that Rotavirus is the most common cause of infectious diarrhea among infants and children that, when left untreated, can lead to dehydration and death.

In the Asia-Pacific region alone, almost 171,000 children die before reaching 5 years old because of Rotavirus.

To address this alarming number of Rotavirus cases and deaths, Family Health International, together with the Pediatric Infectious Diseases Society of Thailand and the Asian Society for Pediatric Infectious Diseases, hosted the Asia-Pacific Rotavirus Metaforum.

Discussed during the forum were the burden of the disease in Asia and the possible strategies and policies that can be adopted from developed countries in treating the disease.

The forum also encouraged the acceptance of vaccine as treatment to Rotavirus through leading health policy decision makers and initiated the development of consensus and guidelines on the need to eradicate Rotavirus through vaccination in countries located in the Asia-Pacific.

According to Brooks, "Rotavirus is common in populated countries with low socioeconomic status, majority of which are located in Asia. In fact almost 55 percent of deaths attributed to Rotavirus happens in Asia."

Transmitted through contaminated water or food, Rotavirus can be mild or severe and has an incubation period of about two days. It is characterized by vomiting, fever, severe diarrhea, nausea, loss of appetite and abdominal cramps.

However, Rotavirus cannot be cured by antibiotics and an improvement in sanitation and hygiene cannot prevent its transmission.

Thus, the only possible measure to prevent rotavirus is through vaccination.

And such a vaccine which is now being offered in private hospitals is MSD's RotaTeq.

According to Brooks, "RotaTeq was developed by MSD to address the global burden of illness brought about by Rotavirus."

Introduced in the United States in February 2006 and brought to the Philippines in October 2007, RotaTeq is proven to prevent death and severe disease caused by Rotavirus.

"RotaTeq has five human-bovine serotypes—G1, G2, G3, G4 and P1—that are responsible for 80-90 percent of rotavirus cases worldwide," Brooks said.

RotaTeq is administered orally starting at 6 to 12 weeks of age, with the subsequent doses administered at 4- to 10-week intervals. The third dose should not be given after 32 weeks of age.

To date, RotaTeq is still the only licensed vaccine for Rotavirus in the United States.

Tess Samaniego

Stroke prevention campaigns

By Rafael R. Castillo, MD

(First of two parts)

MEDICAL FILES

DR. JOEY NAVARRO, A HIGHLY RESPECTed neurologist at the University of Santo Tomas Hospital, has a peculiar, albeit, adventurous way to beat stress. He would get on his SUV and drive to exciting places such as Baler in Aurora province. Then he would rent a boat, or paddle a small one by himself, get to an isolated place, and cast his fishing rod. Once he catches a fish, he slices it with his Swiss knife, opens his can of wasabi, and eats the fish.

After a whole morning at sea, he would go trekking, even in unfamiliar, seemingly untrodden territories, and enjoy the challenge of managing to find his way back. After a day or two of adventure-filled activities, he would drive back to Manila, feeling unburdened and recharged, and ready to plunge once again into the hectic and stressful schedule that makes his daily routine.

Stress of modern living can be a trigger for stroke and heart attack and one needs to learn to just let go, literally dropping everything when things really get to a head, and taking a breather to relax. It's unfortunate that doctors who treat stroke and heart attack are the ones developing these complications, partly or in great part, triggered by stress.

Antistroke advocacy

These days, Joey is busy with his antistroke advocacy. He is the overall chair of the forthcoming Asia-Pacific Congress Against Stroke, which the Philippines is hosting early next year. This will be attended by stroke experts from all over the world. Joey is also a spokesperson for the I-Stroke public service campaign, launched this week during the 35th annual Philippine Neurological Association (PNA) Convention in Cagayan de Oro City. The I-Stroke, done in partnership with Otsuka Philippines Pharmaceutical Inc., helps inform the public on stroke issues, prevention and treatment.

The program hopes to empower them to make the right decisions on stroke prevention and treatment. Increasing awareness will hopefully reduce the number of disability and deaths associated with this condition. Stroke can maim and kill people at the peak of their careers.

Alongside with this information campaign is the I-Stroke Patient Club for patients, their families, and people at risk for stroke which includes hypertensive patients, diabetics, smokers, obese individuals particularly those with cholesterol problems. For all those interested to join, they may call the I-Stroke Hotline at 811- 4723 for GMA and 1- 800 -1888- 4723 for provincial areas.

Awareness campaign

Still on stroke prevention, the Stroke Society of the Philippines (SSP), Philippine Heart Association (PHA) and Philippine Society of Hypertension (PSH), have joined hands and partnered with Therapharma, a division of Unilab, in a massive trimedia hypertension and stroke awareness campaign. The cost for the campaign is staggering but the proponents for the campaign believe that if it can achieve its objective of making people more conscious about the silent killer which hypertension is, then it's well worth it.

"Stroke may be preventable if the risk factors particularly hypertension are adequately treated," says Dr. Ester Bitanga, SSP president. Dr. Efren Vicaldo laments though that there are a lot of myths and misconceptions about hypertension that need to be corrected. He cites self-medication with heavily advertised but unproven over-the-counter remedies.

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KIDS QUIZ

By Emman Cena

Clothes and fashion

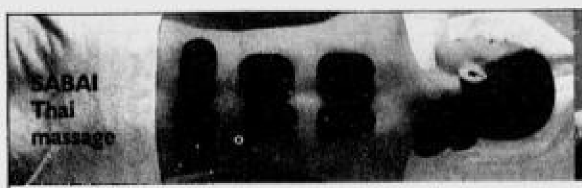
IT'S OGLING TIME AGAIN! ADMIT IT OR NOT, THE COLD SEASON IS THE BEST time for donning your latest and most fabulous garb. Make no excuses for wearing those furry coats and shine on your own runway.

Kiddos! Check your knowledge of clothing-related inventors and inventions by matching each invention on the left with the name of the inventor on the right.

Inventions	Inventor
1. Blue jeans	a) Louis Réard
2. Electric iron	b) Eli Whitney
3. Improved sewing machine	c) Mary Phelps Jacob
4. Panty hose	d) George de Mestral
5. Safety pin	e) Whitcomb Judson
6. Velcro	f) François Fresnau
7. Bikini	g) Allen Grant
8. Brassiere	h) Elias Howe
9. Zipper	i) Henry W. Seeley
10. Raincoat	j) Levi Strauss
	k) Walter Hunt

Score: 1-4 Good; 5-7 Very Good; 8-10 Excellent

Answers: 1-j, 2-i, 3-h, 4-g, 5-k, 6-d, 7-a, 8-c, 9-e, 10-f


SABAI Thai massage

SPA treatment room

FOOT reflex room

Wellness through preventive and integrative medicine

By Emman Cena

WHO WOULD EVER IMAGINE that one could get a medical and spa treatment combined under one roof?

With the experience offered by Amezcua Wellness Center, people with stress, fatigue and even medical conditions could seek help from Amezcua's list of medical practitioners and spa therapists.

Judging from the wellness center's list of services, one could mistake it for a hospital facility, only more homey and without the hospital scent that usually makes patients and visitors cringe. It's a spa and a hospital visit rolled into one.

Amezcua, nestled on Katipunan Avenue in White Plains, Quezon City, truly redefines the concept of spas. As part of the country's step toward becoming the next hub of medical tourism, it might well be one of the country's pride—our first and only urban medi-spa.

"What differentiates us from the others is that we are home to qualified physicians and professionals who are trained and allowed to perform diagnostic screening procedures," says Dr. Edwin Bien, Amezcua's medical director since it opened its doors to the public in February last year.

AMEZCUA'S facade

Preventive medicine

"We advocate a comprehensive approach to health care. Aside from our spa services (body massage, wraps, scrubs, foot reflexology), we also recommend fitness activities like yoga, and alternative therapies and treatments that complement the modern practice of Western medicine," Bien adds.

Aside from giving the rejuvenation and refuge from all day's work, it is the goal of Dr. Bien's team to detect early signs of illnesses, utilizing both natural and organic way of dealing with health issues.

Amezcua advocates the use of preventive medicine to detect weaknesses in the system before the symptoms of the disease manifest. While hospitals would prescribe synthetic drugs for a simple pain, the center, on the other hand, would help patients look into the potential source of the problem by strengthening one's immune system.

"It is part of living a healthy lifestyle by following a disciplined routine of medical checkups, proper diet, exercise and therapeutic spa treatments that reinvigorate mind and body," Bien tells the INQUIRER in an interview.

"If you already have the sickness, what we do is complement the treatment. Like we do pain management, and give you alternative medicine, all of which are organic and herbal-based."

This writer recently experienced wellness in Amezcua. He was made to undergo the live blood analysis, and the traditional Pinoy *hilot*, which according to them is their bestseller. The experience was to die for, and it could almost put one's tired body to a sound sleep.

Modern equipment, facilities

Amezcua also boasts some of the world's most modern medical equipment and facilities which are rarely, if at all, used by other medical establishments in the Philippines. These include body terrain assessment which uses state-of-the-art equipment for checking the blood, urine and saliva to evaluate organ functions.

Also among its medical treatments is its colonic hydrotherapy, considered to be the most modern and comprehensive method of cleansing the large intestine. It involves warm water infusion into the large intestine, and subsequent flushing of accumulated waste matter through a machine in a painless, comfortable and very hygienic manner.

And for those seeking some meditation and relaxing exercises, they can choose to spend time at the Meditation Kubo or the Body Quest Studio, which is perfect for one's yoga, pilates and T'ai Chi sessions.

Amezcua's medical doctors, who trained in traditional and alternative medicine, also perform hi-tech procedures such as tumor marker blood exam, meridian stress assessment, lymphatic drainage, lymphatic facial and aromatherapy and iridology diagnoses. Acupuncture and reflexology are also available for treatment of a wide variety of ailments.

Medical tourism

According to Bien, Amezcua springboards from the government's thrust of making the country a medical tourism hub.

"We have a good edge over First World countries. We could compete head on with their facilities at a fraction of their rates. Our doctors are trained locally and internationally," he adds.

In the United States and other neighboring Asian countries, wellness is projected to be a trillion-dollar industry by 2010. On its end, Amezcua (632-913-1353) aims to take a big slice of that market for the Philippines.

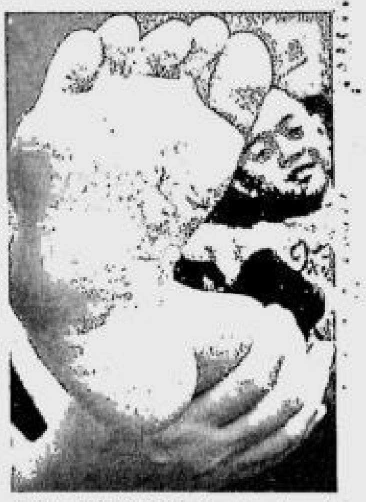
St. Luke's helps boy put his best foot forward

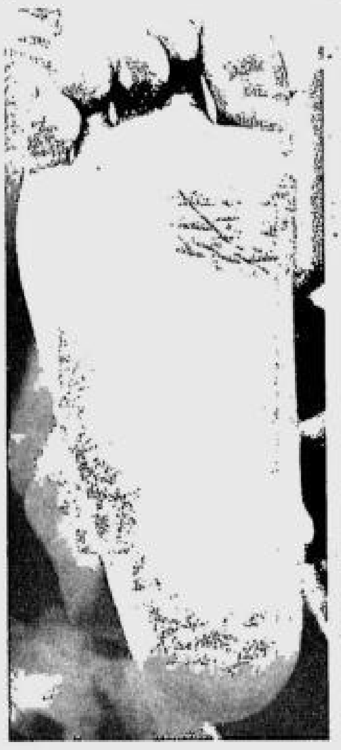
CarePlus

Christine F. Liwanag

JUAN MARTIN "JM" PAZ WAS born with clubfoot, a congenital deformity that made his right foot twist at the ankle. At 5 months of age, JM underwent a complicated operation to correct the condition. His clubfoot however was not fully corrected and progressively increased in severity.

JM's parents, Milo and Cynthia, noticed that their son's right heel wasn't developing normally and his right leg seemed smaller than the left one. When JM was 3 years old, his clubfoot further worsened. The toddler walked with a limp, using the sole of his right foot for support, and had difficulty maintaining his balance. "We were losing hope," Milo recalls.


JM'S CLUBFOOT before treatment


JM'S RIGHT foot after one-and-a-half years of treatment with Ponseti technique

Nonsurgical treatment

In 2006 while surfing the Internet, Milo read about a nonsurgical treatment for clubfoot. Named after its Spanish inventor Dr. Ignacio V. Ponseti from the University of Iowa Hospital, the technique has a 98 percent success rate. It involves a method of manipulating the clubfoot through a serial plaster cast to achieve a normal-looking, supple and fully functional foot.

Unfortunately, the couple didn't have the resources to bring their child to Iowa or Thailand where the nearest available surgeon capable of performing the Ponseti technique was based. They continued scouring the Internet and eventually found an e-group that referred them to the only Filipino doctor in the Philippines qualified to perform the Ponseti technique.

The couple immediately brought 5-year-old JM to Dr. Julyn Aguilar, head of the Pediatric Orthopedics Section of the Institute of Orthopedics and Sports Medicine at St. Luke's Medical Center. At first, Dr. Aguilar wasn't sure the Ponseti technique would work for JM; the treatment had never been done on children older than 2 years. Finding that the boy's bones were still tender, however, she decided there was no harm in trying.

Castings

In March 2006, JM's treatment with the Ponseti technique began. Every week, Milo and Cynthia brought their son to St. Luke's for casting. Dr. Aguilar would gently manipulate the boy's clubfoot and applied a cast that extended up to the groin. The cast would stay for a week then removed and replaced. After three weekly castings came the long Holy Week holidays and JM's foot remained in a cast for two weeks. When Dr. Aguilar removed the cast, she realized that at some point in treatment keeping the cast for one and a half to two weeks achieves better correction.

Although the extended castings significantly improved JM's foot, it still couldn't be positioned completely flat on the floor ("plantigrade"). The conventional treatment for clubfoot is major surgery, but the Paz couple couldn't afford the operation's cost of at least P100,000.

"We asked Dr. Aguilar whether continuing with the two-week castings would achieve the same effect as surgery," Cynthia says. "She was inspired by the idea."

After a few more weeks of extended castings, JM showed no signs of clubfoot and his foot had achieved "plantigrade" position. Dr. Aguilar had shown that the Ponseti technique could be successfully used in children with clubfoot who were older than 2 years and for the first time proved that the Ponseti technique can be totally surgery-free in older children.

Impressed

With the consent of the boy's parents, Dr. Aguilar presented JM's case at the International Clubfoot Symposium held in September 2007 in Iowa where she was invited as a speaker. More than 200 delegates from 44 countries were impressed by Dr. Aguilar's success with the Ponseti technique. Her presentation and the Philippines" webpage were posted at the Ponseti Friends International Website. The Philippines is only the second country to have its webpage put up by the University of Iowa.

St. Luke's Institute of Orthopedics and Sports Medicine and the University of Iowa Ponseti Team plan to conduct more Ponseti courses for local doctors after successfully conducting its first Ponseti course on Oct 13-14, 2007. In cooperation with the Global Clubfoot Initiative of the University of Iowa and the World Health Organization, St. Luke's has taken the lead in establishing a National Clubfoot Program.

The program aims to address the country's "neglected" clubfoot cases (those older than one year) by promoting the Ponseti technique, increasing awareness on early detection and treatment; creating a national database for, and conducting research on, clubfoot in collaboration with the University of Iowa.

Thanks to his courage and family's support, JM has overcome clubfoot and can now "walk through life" and fulfill his dreams.

* * *

For feedback, please e-mail the Healthcare Technology and Outcomes Information Bureau at inquire@htoib.com.

DR. Julyn Aguilar with JM. During the recently held St. Luke's Recognition Program, Dr. Aguilar received the Achievement Award for her outstanding contribution to the management of children with clubfoot deformities using the Ponseti technique.

The curious science of everyday life

Eureka!

Queena N. Lee-Chua

AS A PSYCHOLOGIST, I HAVE read my share of academic papers, and they are not exactly the stuff of cocktail party conversation. Most are highly serious, even if they are artificial results that may not hold in the everyday world.

It is therefore refreshing to come across Prof. Richard Wiseman of the University of Hertfordshire, who has spent much of his life pursuing questions such as how our surnames influence our lives (Wiseman points out that his last name has certainly been helpful in his profession), and why women should hire men to write their personal ads (men predict more accurately which ads are more effective).

Wiseman is no quack (by the way, the letter K is used often in jokes, because pronouncing it makes our lips form a smile, and doing so may make us happier). Wiseman received Britain's first Professorship in the Public Understanding of Psychology and the Joseph Lister award for Social Science in 2002. In 2005, he became president of the General Section of the British Association for the Advancement of Science. He is also an award-winning professional magician.

Truth or lie

In his bestselling book "Quirkology," Wiseman uses ingenious research to make sense of how we really act. For instance, he invites the comedian Leslie Nielsen to tell the truth and to lie in interviews, and asks people to rate which passage tells the truth. When people look at Nielsen, they mostly fail to detect the test, but when they listen to him (on the radio) they are more successful.

"It has little to do with whether liars look you in the eye, move their hands around, or shift about in their seat," Wiseman says. "The most reliable signs of lying are in a person's voice and their unconscious choice of language. The lack of key details in their descriptions; the increase in pauses and hesitations; the way liars distance themselves from their deceit by avoiding self-references such as 'I' and failing to describe their feelings. The way they seem to be able to remember minute information that truth-tellers forget. Learn to listen for the secret signals and the thin veil of deception is lifted."

Quirkology

"Quirkology" was riveting, and I finished the book in two days. Along the way, I came across the following strange but true results.

- What is the difference between a fake and a real smile? Look at the eyes. In a real smile, the skin around the eyes crinkles; in a fake smile, it remains much flatter.
- Can science explain ghosts? Maybe. Some seemingly ghostly experiences, such as feeling an odd sense of presence (shivers, the hair standing at the back of the neck) have been revealed to be due to low-frequency sound waves produced by the wind blowing across windows or in halls.
- Women are less aggressive than men, right? Not always. In a series of studies, women van drivers have been shown to be more likely than others to take more than the required items through the express lane in a supermarket. They are also more likely to break speed limits and to park in restricted zones.
- Why is the Mona Lisa so fascinating? Because Leonardo da Vinci painted her so that her smile appears more striking when people look at her eyes than at her mouth.
- Do you want to win at Trivial Pursuit? People asked to describe a university professor answered more questions correctly than those describing a football hooligan.
- What is the funniest joke in the world? Read this column next week.

The preceding results are not trivial, either. "The work is serious science, and much of it has important implications for the way in which we live our lives, and structure our society," Wiseman says. "Quirkologists have given us important insights into many areas of psychology, including deception, superstition and altruism. Such work has also helped uncover the secret psychology that underlies our everyday lives, and illustrated just how fascinating those everyday lives really are."

A must read, "Quirkology" is highly recommended for students, teachers, parents, scientists, young and old, who are curious about the quirky side of life.

Quirkology: The Curious Science of Everyday Lives, by Richard Wiseman, is available in Powerbooks.

'Gwapo' is in the genes

Discover

Massie Santos Ballon

JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE MAY HAVE been credited with bringing sexy back, but researchers at the University of Exeter's Cornwall Campus say that it's actually hereditary.

In the Nov. 20 issue of the journal Current Biology, researchers led by evolutionary biologist David Hosken provide evidence for what they say has been a "key assumption" of sexual selection: namely, that attractive males produce attractive sons.

In many species, flash and style help the males get females to pay attention, and, hopefully, win them the right to sire offspring. Consider the peacocks with iridescent feathers and bold graphics while the peahens are drab gray and brown. Looks aren't just the reason for the bright colors and fancy moves, though; if predators can't catch the hard-to-miss male, then it proves to the females that this guy is young, healthy and virile, and therefore has genes that are worth passing on to the next generation.

Proof

To prove their theory, Hosken's team studied fruit flies, mating 68 male flies with two or three females each. The 527 sons that resulted from these pairings were collected as soon as they emerged from their mothers and were then housed with each other. None of these males met the opposite sex until each was placed in a single vial with a single virgin female.

Here's where the attractiveness test comes in: alone with the female in the vial, the male fruit fly couldn't mate unless she was willing. And to be willing, said Hosken et al., meant she found the male fly "hot."

So the researchers timed each pair to see how long it would take for the flies to mate. The longer it took them to mate, the less attractive the female found the male, they said. Hosken's team found that some fruit fly pairs started mating within two minutes of meeting, while other pairs took as long as two hours. Given that these flies only live for a month or so, would holding out for two hours be the female fruit fly's equivalent of the human declaration, "I wouldn't sleep with you unless you were the last man on Earth"?

Hereditary

By tracking the fly family trees, the researchers could then compare how long it took each male to mate against his father's times. The correlations they found in the data led to their conclusion that attractiveness is hereditary.

Attractiveness might not be the only thing handed down from father to son. To help ensure their offspring always present themselves favorably instead of having his insides warring over whether or not he'll warble in tune or off-key, a recent study from the University of Florida has suggested that having only one X chromosome actually helps males evolve faster in order to beat the competition and win the female. Traits can either be passed on or deleted from the next generation with relative ease, they say.

"Attractiveness probably can't be defined by individual characteristics, so there is no single physical attribute that female fruit flies are looking for in a mate," said Hosken in a statement. "However, there is clearly a benefit to females in having sexy sons that are more likely to attract a mate and produce offspring."

Though the researchers haven't tested this theory on other species, they think it'll work across the board. "It's possible that attractiveness is hereditable across the animal kingdom," said Hosken. "It could even be the case in humans that the sexiest dads also have the most desirable sons."

E-mail the author at massie@massie.com.

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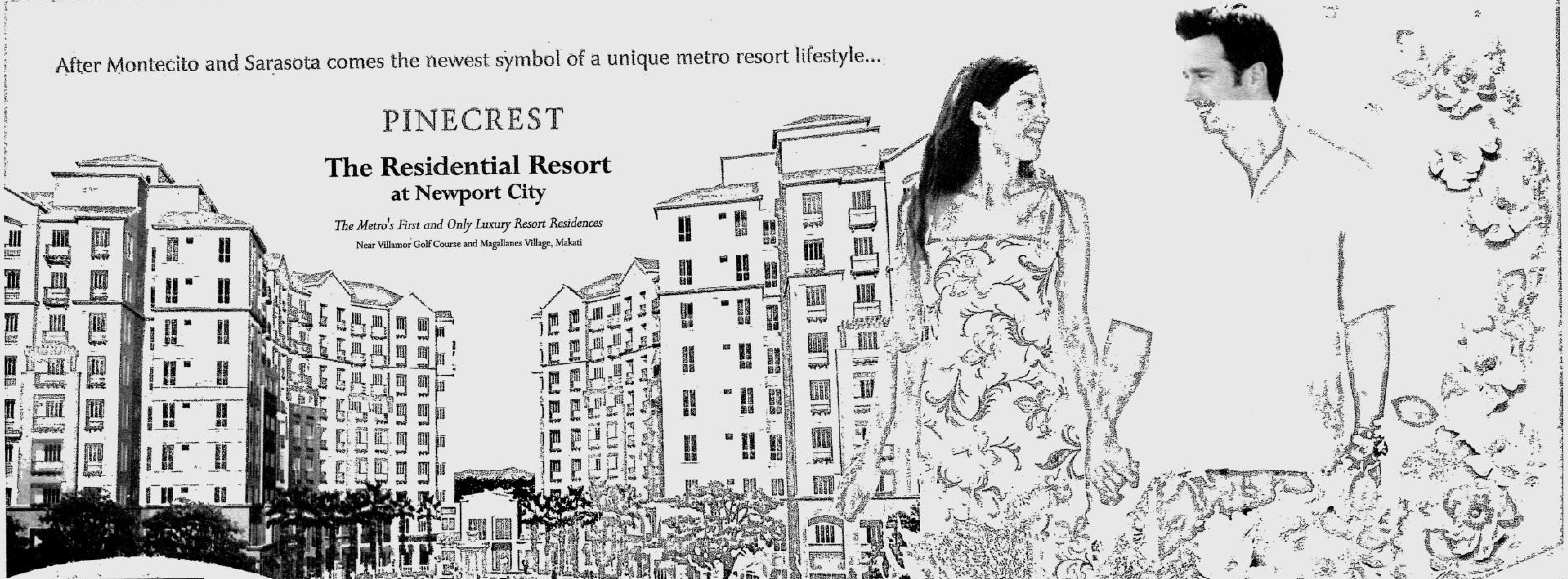

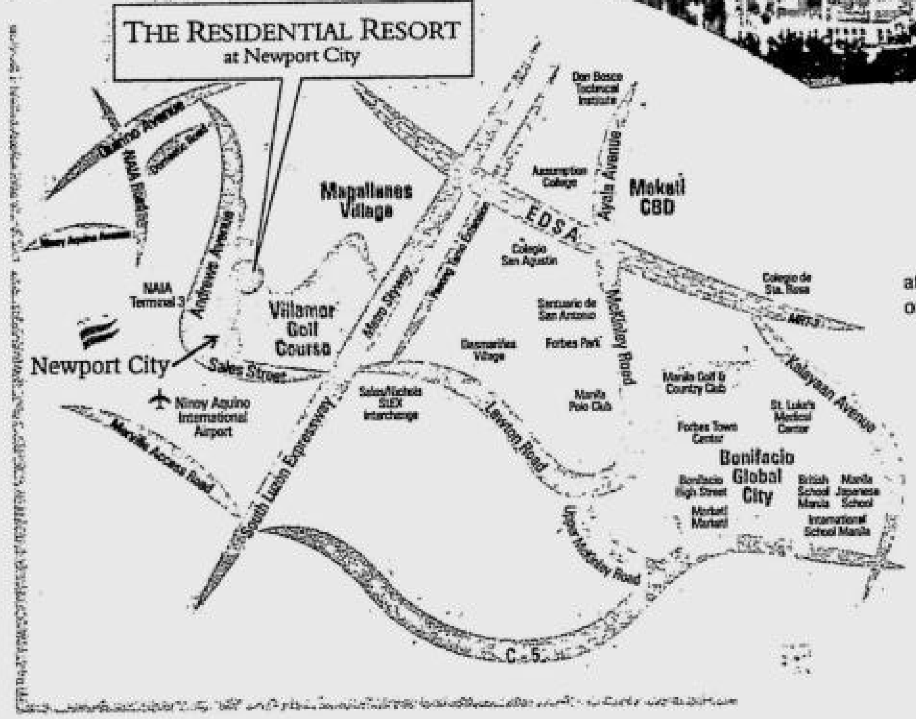
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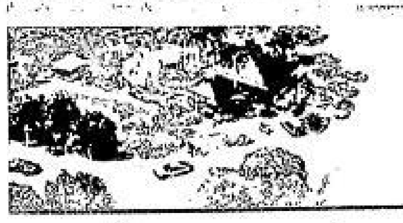

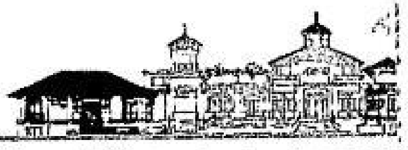

When 'ready for occupancy' is nothing but a come-on

By Tessa R. Salazar

THE ADVERTISEMENT SAYS IT'S "ready for occupancy." The graphics show a spanking new and completed house. Enticed, you immediately make a down payment, the developer claims that the house is ready and finished with all the utilities properly working and the necessary papers filed.

But when the time comes that the developer should have completed the project and what you still have is just the copy of the deceiving print ad and nothing else, what do you do?

If there's an alleged violation of the housing project, buyers can report it to the Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board monitoring group and request for an inspection of the said project.

Complaints

Mike Denava, legal officer of the Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board, said buyers can get in touch with the HLURB to lodge their complaints. They could even write a letter addressed to the developer and copy furnished to the HLURB.

Denava added that a complainant should also be able to establish that there was an agreement between the two parties of the actual scheduled date of moving in.

If it has been proven that the developer reneged on its promise, whatever rental expenses and other related expenses that were incurred as a result of the unfulfilled promise could be claimed against the developer as actual damages.

Denava admitted that his office has received calls from buyers complaining that they had to wait one more year from the actual date that was promised by the developer. Some of these buyers were then forced to rent in another house as they waited word from the developer.

There have actually been cases "when they arrived at the site, and saw that their house was still unfinished. They had no choice but to rent. They can claim that against the developer as part of the actual damages," he said.

The complaint should be supported by receipts of the expenses of rents. Upon filing of the complaint, the aggrieved party can include attorney's fees and other related legal expenses against the developer.

'Pauper litigants'

HLURB also entertains what it calls "pauper litigants." If the aggrieved party can establish that he or she cannot financially shoulder the costs of the complaint, he or she can file the complaint free of charge. "They can also be assisted by the public attorney's lawyers." He said many have availed of such benefits.

> Buyers can get in touch with the HLURB to lodge their complaints

HLURB employs its own legal team to assist complainants. It has regional offices, but if the project is in a province but both parties are based in Metro Manila, the HLURB allows filing of complaints at the HLURB central office in Quezon City for convenience.

Denava said buyers should not readily believe in photos of finished houses that look good on billboards or advertisements. "There are many incidents like these. The buying public should be aware of this."

How? Conduct an actual site inspection on the housing unit first before making any payment. A prospective buyer should first do actual inspection of the house. Some buyers have the habit of going only to the project on the day when they are scheduled to move in.

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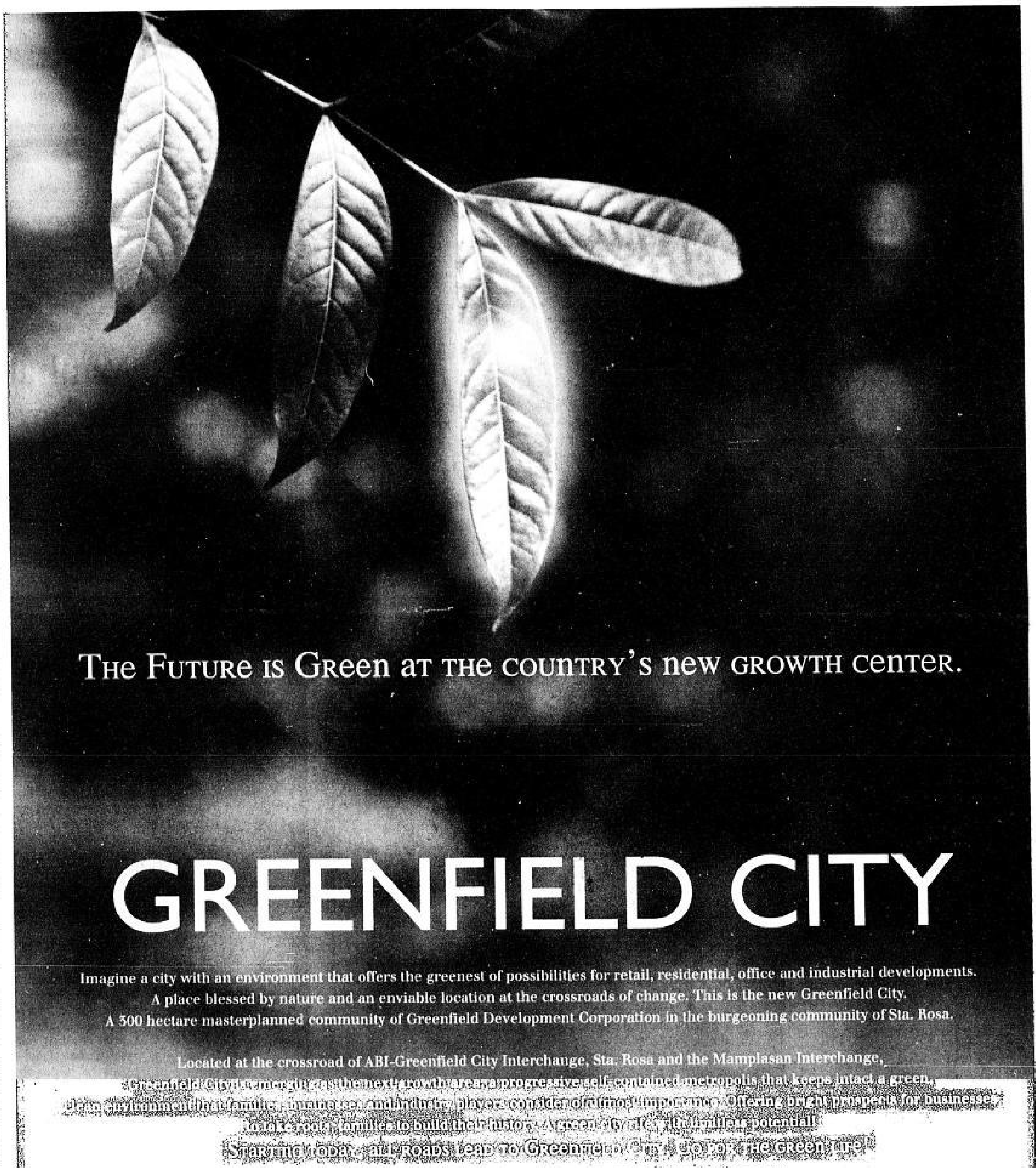

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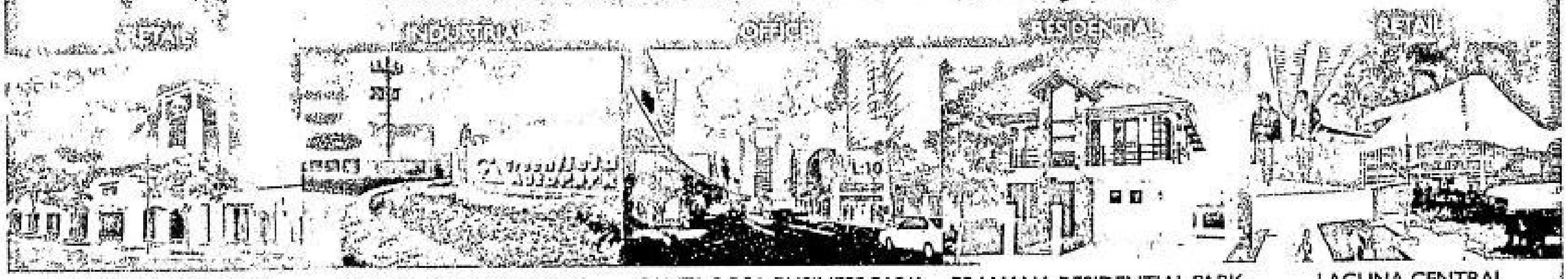

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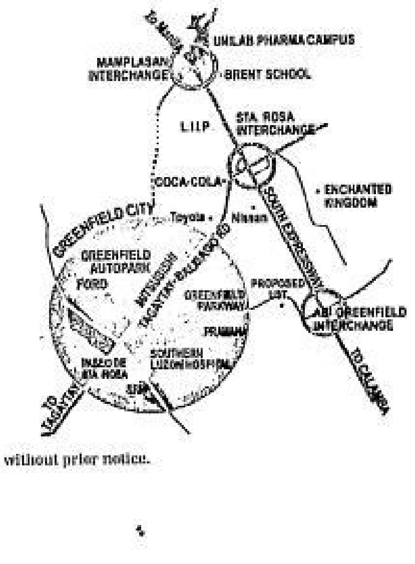
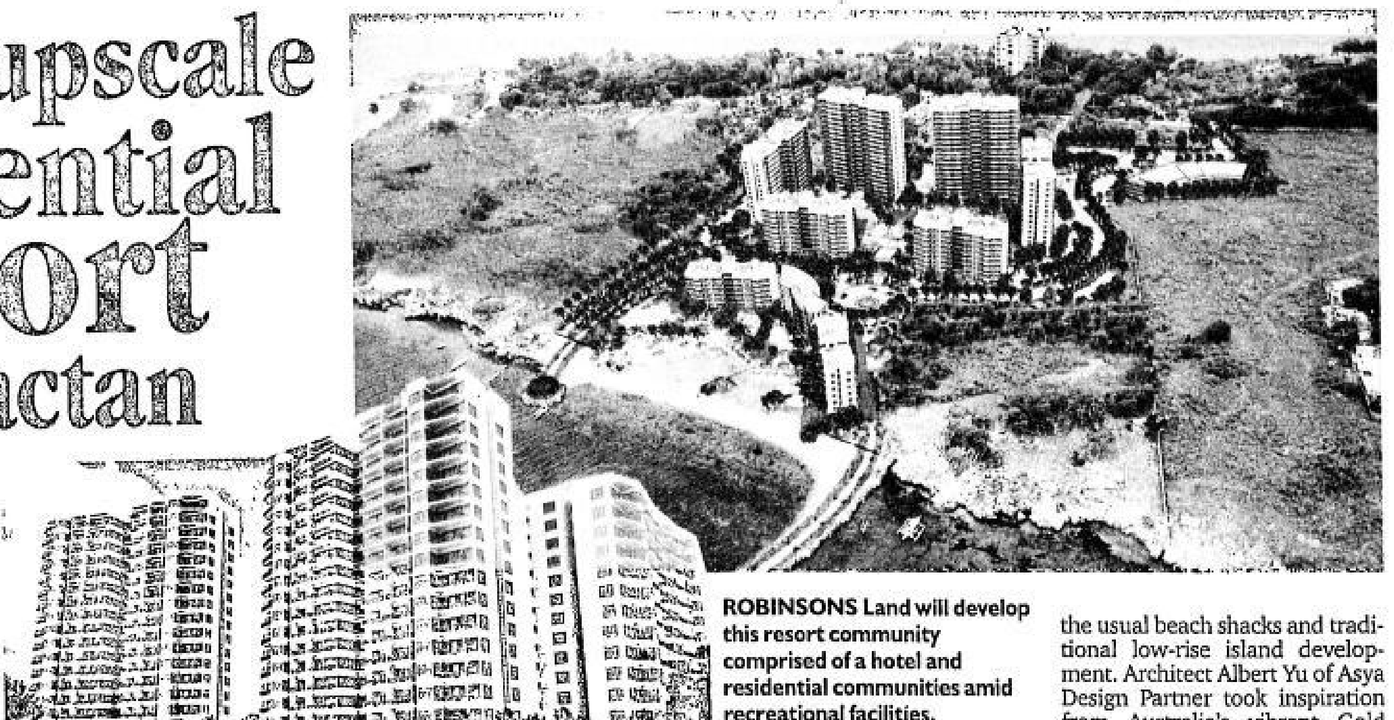


Disclaimer: Written and visual material herein, although based on present plans may not reflect the most current development hence may be subject to change without prior notice.

Amisa: upscale residential resort in Mactan

By Raquel P. Gomez



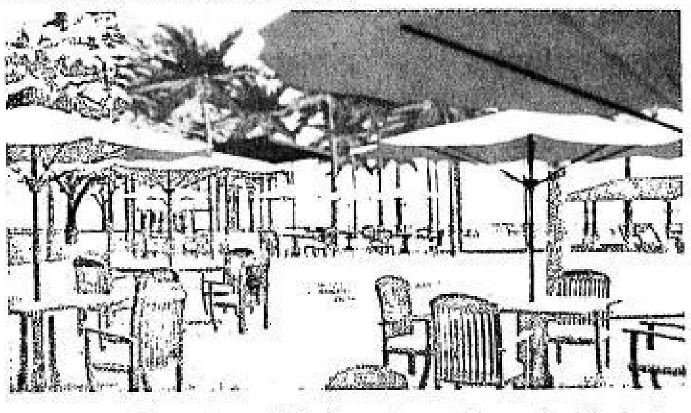
ROBINSONS Land will develop this resort community comprised of a hotel and residential communities amid recreational facilities.

THE LURE OF MACTAN Island in Cebu as a choice destination in the South by tourists, balikbayans, expatriates and businessmen has enticed major real estate developer Robinsons Land Corp. in a grand fashion.

The real estate arm of JG Summit Holdings Inc. that pioneered mix-use developments in the country has set its eyes on a prime spot on the tail-shaped portion of the famous island and will develop it into an upscale resort-residential-leisure zone that will cater to the discriminating taste of a market needing an upgrade to real lifestyle and luxurious living in an island setting.

AmiSa is a five-hectare beachfront property development in Punta Engaño district in Mactan. It boasts of six residential condominiums that offer breathtaking views of the beach, sea and Cebu's coastline, a five-star hotel with amenities, a gaming center that includes a casino, two big and beautiful pools, tree-lined walks and nooks, pocket parks, and open spaces that lead to a pristine white sand beach, and of course, sports activity areas.

RLC president and chief operating officer Frederick Go says AmiSa, which is the company's first high-end real estate venture in Cebu, aims to raise the standard of community living of residents by incorporating beach resort amenities and facilities within the development. He says RLC, with its expertise in mix-use community development and hotel operations, can provide the perfect home and ideal beach getaway for folks needing respite from the bustle of the city or those who wish reward or pampering after years of work and living abroad.



"AmiSa in Sanskrit means something beautiful," Go says. "AmiSa is a beautiful place which can serve as the perfect and ideal getaway from the city, a second home for accomplished Filipinos from Manila and the provinces, a vacation haven for foreigners, and a deserved and welcoming retirement home for Filipino balikbayans."

Private paradise

For a change, the leisure community project moves away from the usual beach shacks and traditional low-rise island development. Architect Albert Yu of Asya Design Partner took inspiration from Australia's vibrant Gold Coast architectural landscape and created a private paradise which addresses the demands of an island living that spells of modernity, leisure and lifestyle.

Architectural elements, such as the balconied mid-rise residential condominiums, are in harmony with the natural picturesque island environment. The avant-garde residential resort also features a nice juxtaposition of graceful towering buildings—two 18 story, two 14-story, and two 8-story residential condominiums, the hotel and entertainment center—that create a beautiful contrast to the soft natural seascape.

"The resort development was conceived to allow its inhabitants enjoyment and interaction with nature, while preserving and enhancing the environment," Yu says. "Every unit is also provided with a spacious balcony that cantilevers beyond the main structure of the building. The union of the balconies to the commanding structure mimics the smooth waves and the ocean."

Design perspective

AmiSa is an exclusive enclave that opens with a rustic lane off the main road framed by a coral stone gateway. Three-tiered cascade of water with lush foliage marks the entrance garden. A majestic rotunda framed by Royal palm trees connects entrances to different areas of the property. Located at the left of the entrance is the gaming complex and to the right are ample and wide parking areas and tree-lined pathways leading to the residential condominiums.

Another grand rotunda is located within serving as the main entry to the resort hotel and condominium gardens. The inviting swimming pools amid tropical palms complete the scenic haven that opens grandly to the beach and sea beyond. And sprinkled across the resort are dining destinations and functions areas fit for parties, weddings and other occasions.

John Reyna, RLC assistant vice president for leisure and retirement, says AmiSa is a timely development in Cebu that will help boost more the appeal of Mactan Island not only as popular destination for resorts and recreation but also as a luxury residential place.

"Real estate clients want a different level of product, something that will fit their lifestyle. We're not selling just a real estate product, but we're offering a lifestyle, a lifestyle to these clients who are exposed already to resorts with condominiums abroad," Reyna informs.

Antel Grand Village: OFWs' pick and best find

By Emman Cena

ANTEL Grand Village's model house units

DURING ITS PRESELLING IN 2005, the Antel Grand Village was like a movie smashing the box office charts. Sixty percent of its first phase had been sold out to homebuyers here and abroad. To date, the demand is still surging.

The promise of quality housing at a reasonable amortization rate may have impelled the growing demand for the latest Antel Land's offering, the Antel Grand Village in General Trias, Cavite.

The 200-hectare land and housing project now offers its remaining house and lot units for interested buyers who are hot on affordable living but with upscale amenities.

"We overdelivered and overfulfilled our promises for the homebuyers. From our preselling, the amenities we now offer have stretched tenfold, but the rates are still within the buyers' means," says Ino Lao, Antel Land marketing director.

The future for a good number of homebuyers, mostly overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) and Caviteños, may not be bleak after all. The developer is keen on delivering their promises. "No fears of backing out and undelivered promises," Lao adds.

The Antel Grand Village boasts five masterfully planned subdivisions, 7-in-1 interconnected swimming pool, 2-story clubhouse and complete community establishments. The clubhouse, perfect for one's recreational activities, will house a fully equipped gym, an aerobics area, a spa and sauna place, a ballroom and lanai dining area.

Successful undertaking

So what made the AGV a successful project?

Lao says the credit goes to their effort of addressing the needs of the homebuyers.

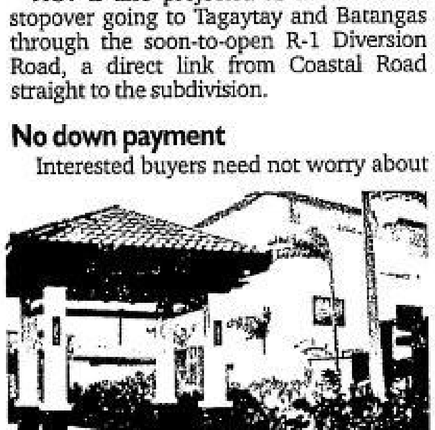
"There are too many of us in the market. People develop homes but they don't really address the needs of the market. Antel is geared toward providing low-priced lands and housing units to middle-income families and migrant workers looking for good investment opportunities in the country," Lao tells the INQUIRER during the Saturday launch of AGV.

Lao quickly adds that the regional connectivity of AGV makes it all the more conducive and practical for people working in the metro. "It is strategically connected with major roads through Coastal Road and the newly opened Macapagal Boulevard or the Parañaque and Alabang route via South Superhighway through the newly passable Daang Hari Road."

AGV is also projected as a convenient stopover going to Tagaytay and Batangas through the soon-to-open R-1 Diversion Road, a direct link from Coastal Road straight to the subdivision.

No down payment

Interested buyers need not worry about the burden of paying up. With its no-down payment, no-reservation and no-interest fee policy, one could get prime lots ranging from 80 to 300 sq m for as low as P6,700 monthly.



THE SOON to rise commercial complex of Antel Grand Village in Gen. Trias, Cavite

"Things are definitely looking up for our middle-class families, especially the OFWs. (Antel) has a programmed price increase of 5 percent every six months or a total of 30 percent appreciation upon completion of the project. Thus, lot prices increase by more than 10 percent per year. So, in buying a property in AGV, residents get to own affordable first-rate estates and earn as the value of land escalates," says Len Tusañeza, AGV project director.

To date, one of the five residential subdivisions, the Grand Pasadena (13.9 hectares) has been sold out, leaving four other subdivisions for sale: the Grand Oakridge (17.43 hectares), Grand Meadows (18.5 hectares), Grand Catalina (18.7 hectares) and the Grand Cedarcrest (8.3 hectares). Also up for grab are the units at Grand Parklane, which serves as AGV's commercial complex and strip.

"We (at Antel Land Holdings) are keen on giving shape to every imaginable possibility that will upgrade the present living conditions of Filipinos. The birth of AGV is a commendable and timely effort in improving the lives of many middle-income families who only used to dream of better standards of living," Tusañeza says.

Manhattan Garden City the 'green heart' of metro

THE FACE OF ARANETA CENTER will soon improve as Megaworld Corp., the top residential condominium and business process outsourcing office buildings developer, will plant a "green heart" in the metropolis through its newest project, Manhattan Parkview Residence in Manhattan Garden City.

Manhattan Parkview will be the second set of condominium towers to rise in MGC after the sold-out three-tower Manhattan Parkway. Manhattan Garden City is an enclave of residential high-rises accessible to both the MRT and LRT 2 via a 729-meter, elevated garden walkway that will connect all the towers. Manhattan Parkview will have an outdoor development plan highlighted by a "walkable" interconnected area and green spaces.

"Most of us would prefer living in a home that is a sanctuary from the stresses of life, a softening haven where we can rest and rejuvenate," said Megaworld Central Properties Inc. President Anthony Charlemagne Yu.

Nature park experience

"A study has shown that well-placed plantings offer privacy and tranquility by screening out street noises and reducing glare from headlights. Another research found out that green space is beneficial to children in terms of improving their functioning. It enables them to think more clearly and cope better with life's stress, which is surely the same case for adults. Manhattan Parkview will give such advantages through a nature park experience. It will have tropical plants, large foliage, wild flowers, accents and water features," Yu said.

In contrast to common manicured or formally laid-out landscapes, the tropical gardens of Manhattan Parkview will have free-form planting arrangements.

Varieties of flowers in happy colors will lift the spirit and beautify MGC's other amenities: the pool, benches, sun decks, trellises and others. They will also give privacy to outdoor amenity users. "There is growing evidence that plants lower blood pressure, reduce muscle tension related to stress, improve attention, and minimize negative feelings," Yu noted.

Other benefits

Economically and healthwise, Manhattan Parkview will have other benefits as well because it is considered a green rooftop development concept. "A green rooftop insulates the building against both heat and cold, using less energy while creating more oxygen," Yu explained.

"It contributes greatly to human comfort and health in an urban area such as Araneta Center by cutting urban surface temperatures, reducing storm water run off, and filtering pollutants and carbon dioxide," he said.

Breathing in cleaner air and refreshed by greenery, MGC residents can move in greater speed and comfort as well to other commercial areas, to universities and business districts through a grand transfer pavilion to the LRT and MRT.

A joint venture of the Araneta Group and Megaworld, Manhattan Garden City is the first and only transit-oriented development linked to two mass transit systems. It will rise in the same complex as countless dining, shopping and entertainment establishments.

Fitness and sports buffs can schedule sessions in the gym, lap pool, tennis court, or basketball court. Young families can fill the picnic area and playground with their laughter. The meditative types can sit by the reflective pool or tread barefoot on the reflexology path. Finding one's own nook will be easy as a landscaped area will embrace every block of MGC at the fourth level.

The Manhattan Garden City showroom and its elegantly appointed model units are conveniently located at the 3rd level of Gateway Mall. Please call 810-3333 to make a viewing appointment.

Amore at Portofino a paragon of rustic charm and romance

OFTEN, LOVE COMES FROM THE MOST unexpected places. It can come from a friend, a stranger, even an old foe. It can also surface from a sprawling Italian-inspired 300-hectare development called Portofino by Vista Land's Brittany Corp.

Indeed, this maverick master developer has built to enchant and endear, reveling in its love affair with the land. Nowhere is this more pronounced than in Amore, one of the enclaves in Portofino that brings to life all the attributes of love with lots of Tuscan heart. Originally an 11-hectare enclave, Amore is adding a 13-hectare expansion in response to the demand of custom home sites and signature homes. By visiting Amore, you'll understand why it is the Italian expression of love.

Truly a paragon

Conveniently located on the spine road connecting the Las Piñas-Cavite-Laguna-Muntinlupa Link Road closest to the San Pedro Exit in Laguna, Amore is truly a paragon of rustic charm and romance. It sits on a fertile, rolling terrain cradled by trees, preserved through time. And its homes echo an unmistakable Tuscan flair—from the sun-drenched walls and tiled roofs, to its squarish cupolas and splendid courtyards.

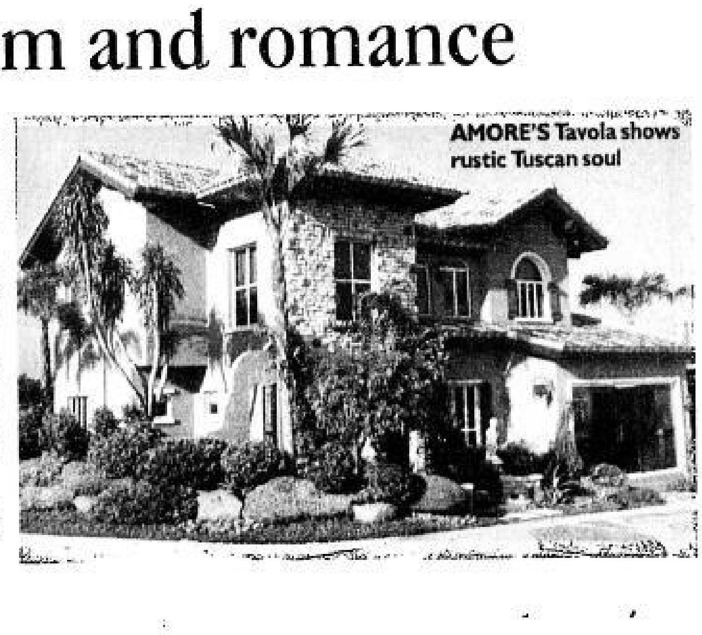
Attractively priced home and lot packages make Amore an ideal choice for those who want to live the sweet life at Portofino. Amore's distinct clusters—an assemblage of four single-detached residential units with a common paved driveway and a landscaped pocket garden.

Another Amore facet is its landscaped corridors, created by combining the open space of two Amore enclaves and maintaining the old trees that dot the perimeter. This allows Amore homeowners to enjoy greater freedom of space while preserving the beautiful vista.

With all these details lovingly master-planned by Brittany, it's easy to be swept away by Amore. It can capture your heart, enough to make you call it home.

Brittany is a maverick real estate developer of innovative and creative lifescapes. Its eclectic and vibrant portfolio includes Brittany Bay, CrossWinds, Portofino, Georgia Club, The Islands, Mosaic at Greenbelt and Avant at The Fort.

For inquiries and property previews, please call 850-2868 or 850-3084 or visit www.brittany.com.ph.



AMORE'S Tavola shows rustic Tuscan soul

The Beacon

After being overlooked in the property frenzy that has swept the country's premiere financial district, Chino Roces Avenue (formerly Pasong Tamo) Avenue has now emerged as the latest real estate arena in Makati City where major mid-market developers are going toe-to-toe with their high-rise residential condominiums.

The renaissance of what has been widely held as the Main Street to Ayala Avenue's Wall Street offers property buyers a rare ringside view of how the various real estate projects stack up against each other in one location catering to the biggest market sector in Metro Manila.

And so far, the tale of the tape shows that The Beacon is head and shoulders above its peers.

The Beacon, a three-tower residential high rise development at the corner of Chino Roces and Arnaiz Avenue (Pasay Road),is built at better-than-industry standards with an impressive amenities package that sets it apart from the mind-numbing sameness which afflicts most condominium projects.

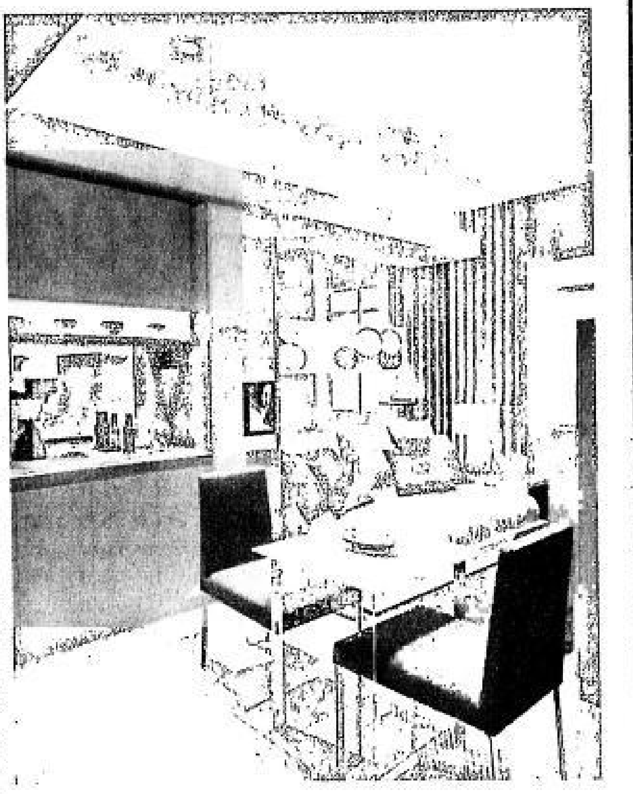
The Beacon unarguably has the best location among the vertical projects in the workingman's strip as it sits right smack in the middle of Chino Roces' commercial-entertainment hub (Makati Cinema Square, Creekside Mall, Tokyo Town, and Waltermart) with three major access ways - Don Chino Roces, Arnaiz (formerly Pasay Road) and Amorsolo.

The project is just a brisk walk or a short jeepney ride away from schools, churches, hospitals, restaurants, shopping and business offices in the CBD. Being within walking distance from the main Central Business District, The Beacon is a practical choice for condo buyers who do not want to go through the hassle of driving and parking in Makati but need to be in the thick of the business activities there.

More than half of the units in The Beacon are studios that are designed with the upwardly mobile Makati professional in mind. These units can also be easily combined in a variety of configurations to suit the needs of almost any resident. The Beacon, despite its quality credentials, sells for up to 20 % less than the other addresses just one or two blocks away. Anyone can find a unit at The Beacon that can fit his or her budget.

For the uninitiated, all buildings are just a mix of concrete, glass and steel. However The Beacon goes beyond the conventional way of using beams and slabs to give its residents something truly special for a project of its class.

The Beacon has high ceilings (2.8 meters to the normal 2.4 to 2.6 meters), wide hallways (1.5 meters versus the industry average of 1.2 meters), broad windows and well thought out floorplans for its studio, two-bedroom, penthouse and garden loft units designed to eschew the claustrophobic feel in other condominiums.



Each unit comes with elegant 600x600mm homogeneous tile flooring. The kitchen has a granite countertop with modular cabinets, an electric cooktop and ducted range hood. The bathroom has a shower enclosure in addition to all the usual fittings. Buyers get a number of color options that they can pick to suit their tastes

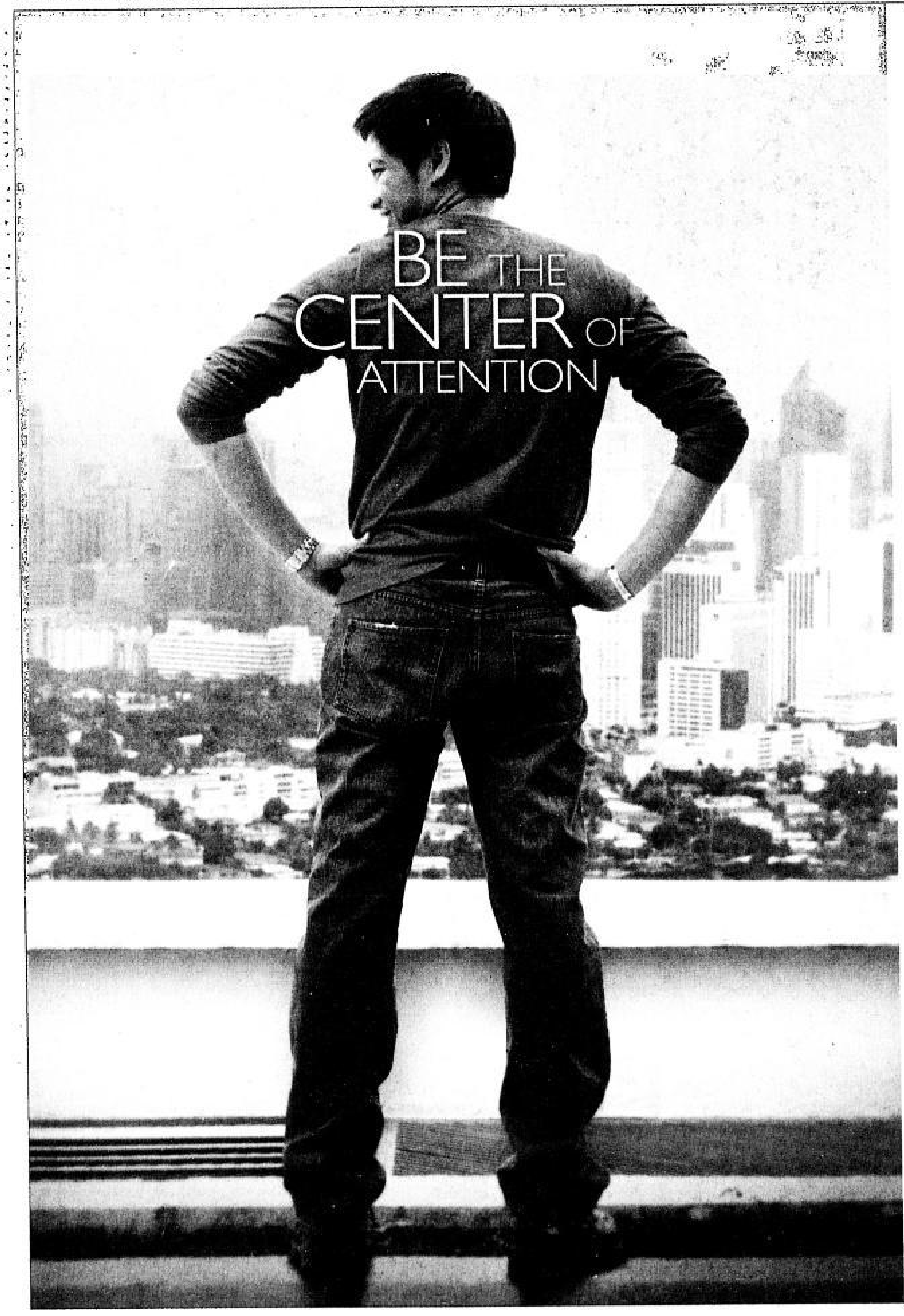
In a city with some of country's highest real estate prices, every inch of space counts and this was the mantra behind the Beacon's practical design and lay-out.

Working on a hectare of land, The Beacon's architects had more room to tweak its design to ensure that each resident has a spectacular vista of the cityscape and not just a view of the neighbor's window. All three towers will stand on a six-level podium ensuring that all units are above the adjacent Skyway ramp.

The Beacon's residents can also choose to chill out without going out of the complex. The podium's top floor has a wide range of amenities and a cozy clubhouse atmosphere, similar to those in residential subdivision projects. It has a resort-inspired 50-meter lap pool with sunken decks and a wet bar. There's a children's playground with separate child and toddlers wading pool; a 300-meter jogging trail; a bi-level gym with massage and sauna facilities; a 20-seater private theater; and a meditation garden

The Beacon also addresses other concerns of condo inhabitants. It has 3 high-speed passenger and a high-speed passenger/service elevators; a concierge staff to assist residents with their errands; a chamber maid service to clean rooms on a regular basis which allows residents to do away with hiring a maid; and a shuttle service which gives residents quick access to the offices and malls of Makati.

With its offer of practical living in superior style, The Beacon is a pound for pound, the magnet-drawing residence for yuppies, managers, professionals, students and investors that make this side of Makati the new boom town. Visiting The Beacon showroom is worth the trip and an eye-opening experience.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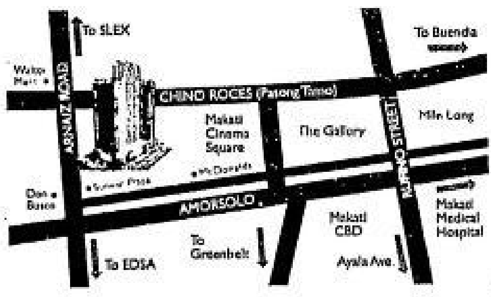
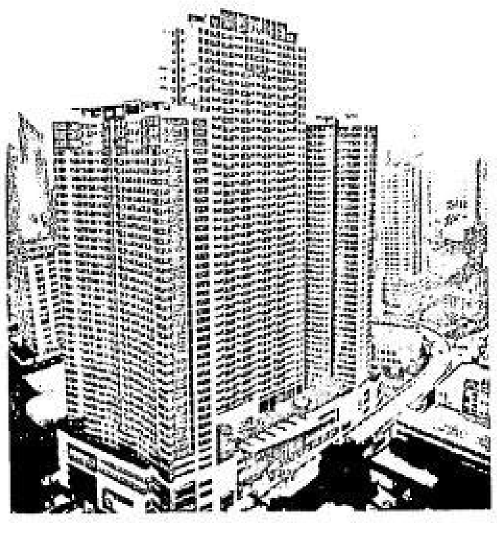


Unit prices start at P1.5M or as low as P12,888 a month.

Things look different when seen from the top. And when it's seen from a prime location like The Beacon, it looks even better. Rising along Don Chino Roces Avenue corner Arnaiz Avenue, this is the prime address you've been looking for because everything that matters is just close by. The Makati Central Business district, premier shopping centers like Greenbelt, Glorietta and Waltermart, hospitals, schools and churches are all just steps away.

Live here and watch the world revolve around you. Complete with close to a hectare's worth of full-sized amenities and an assortment of special services, you know that this is the star lifestyle that you've been craving for.

To top it off, being a star is now within your reach. You can finally enjoy all the perks and privileges of living like a star at a prime address. Here, the prices are so friendly on your pocket, making your home at The Beacon is a walk in the park.



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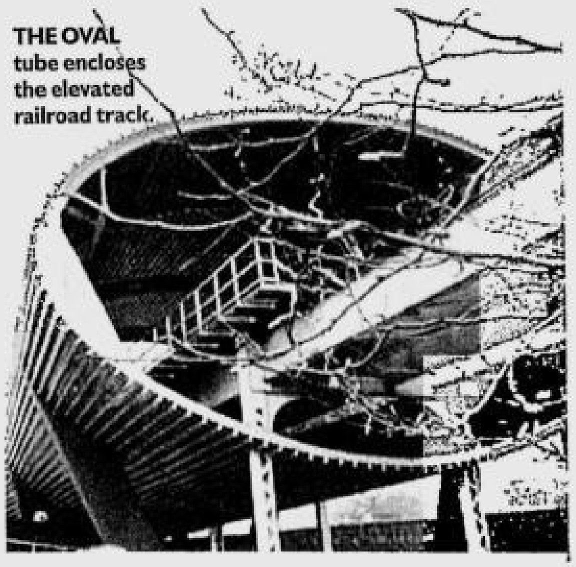
EPOXIED hallways, exposed steel columns, unfinished gypsum ceilings and orange tones from the window screen create a unique indoor experience.



THE OVAL tube encloses the elevated railroad track.

Seeing cutting-edge cool by Koolhaas

DESIGN DIMENSIONS

Isabel Berenguer Asuncion

HOW DOES ONE DESIGN A SCHOOL study center underneath an elevated railroad track, with its immediate vicinity a seeming uninhabitable no-man's-land due to the thunderous rattle of the train? Dutch architect and designer Rem Koolhaas answered well when he came up with the design for Illinois Institute of Technology's McCormick Tribune Campus Center.

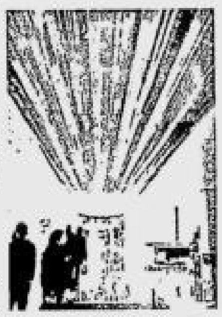
I was in the campus two weeks ago as part of a tour of the architectural wonders in this Chicago campus district known as Hyde Park. With its diverse architectural styles, Hyde Park is a must-visit. With a diverse array of gothic edifices, modern high rises and the largest concentration of mansions in the city, Hyde Park offers a remarkable collection of structures and design marvels not seen in other places.

Architectural landmark

Frank Lloyd Wright's famed Robie House, designated by the American Institute of Architects as one of the top five buildings in the United States, is found within this neighborhood. And within it too is the world's greatest assembly of buildings designed by Mies van Der Rohe, the first chair of its architecture department. The IIT campus is considered an architectural landmark of Chicago. In 2005, the entire academic campus was placed on the National Register of Historic Places of the United States.

Having to work within the campus domain of modernist architect Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, Koolhaas drew away from the rigid boxy modernist forms of van Der Rohe's buildings and created a contextual framework for the new building he was tasked to design.

The main design feature is the 161-meter long oval ribbed stainless steel tube that encloses the elevated train which cuts through the campus grounds. The tube muffles the thunderous noise of a passing train as I experienced during my tour of the facility. Underneath it is the cutting-edge one-story student facility that houses a coffee bar, auditorium, convenience stores, post office, bookstore and computer room.



THE UNDERBELLY of the railroad track enclosure manifests inside as the main axis for the walkways.

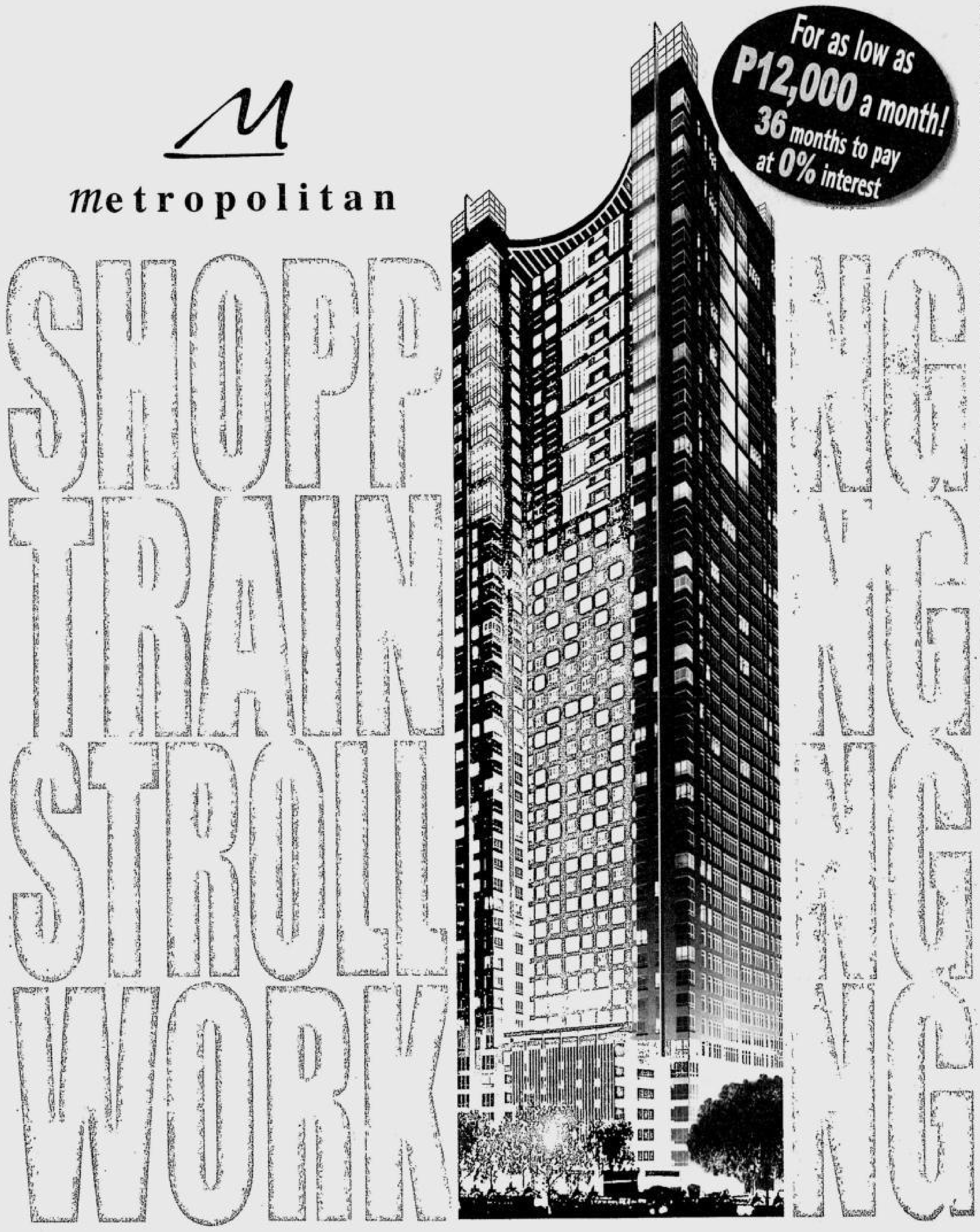
Interior layout

Since the interior layout and spatial arrangement was inspired by the existing footpaths that criss-crossed under the train tracks formed by students walking back and forth between residence halls and classroom buildings, the interior pathways dodge the stainless steel tube whose underside interestingly forms the main axis inside the building. It adds an intriguing texture to the ceiling and revel as the existence of the railroad track right above the facility.

Inside, the diagonal walkways are paved with stainless steel panels and shiny epoxy flooring. The walls are layers of transparent and translucent panels framed in stainless steel. The windows are double-glazed glass panels that sandwich a honeycomb of orange tubes that filter daylight and cast dramatic orange hues within the space.

While the outside of the campus is bright with natural light and presents an all-encompassing green from the landscape, the interior of the student center contrasts with tones of red and orange, creating a vastly diverse experience to the outside. The planes that cut through the spaces inside make for fascinating slivers of space that are afloat at various levels, and with the artificial lighting defining the planes, the study center experience is unlike any other.

Walking through the center made me want to be a student once more. Being the main student facility in a technical institute, the building more than inspires: it sets the standards for learning architecture and design. On a larger scale, it's a major contribution to the visual candy that is the remarkable characteristic of Hyde Park. Contrasting with the existing Mies van der Rohe modernist boxes, it is one facility that would make Mies—and the campus students—proud.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Editor **Cesar D. Mangawang**

PROPERTY

INOS explains that accent boulders as well as carefully placed stones could add a lot interest, impact, and character to a landscape.

Landscaping could benefit any space regardless of size

Text and photos by Charles E. Buban

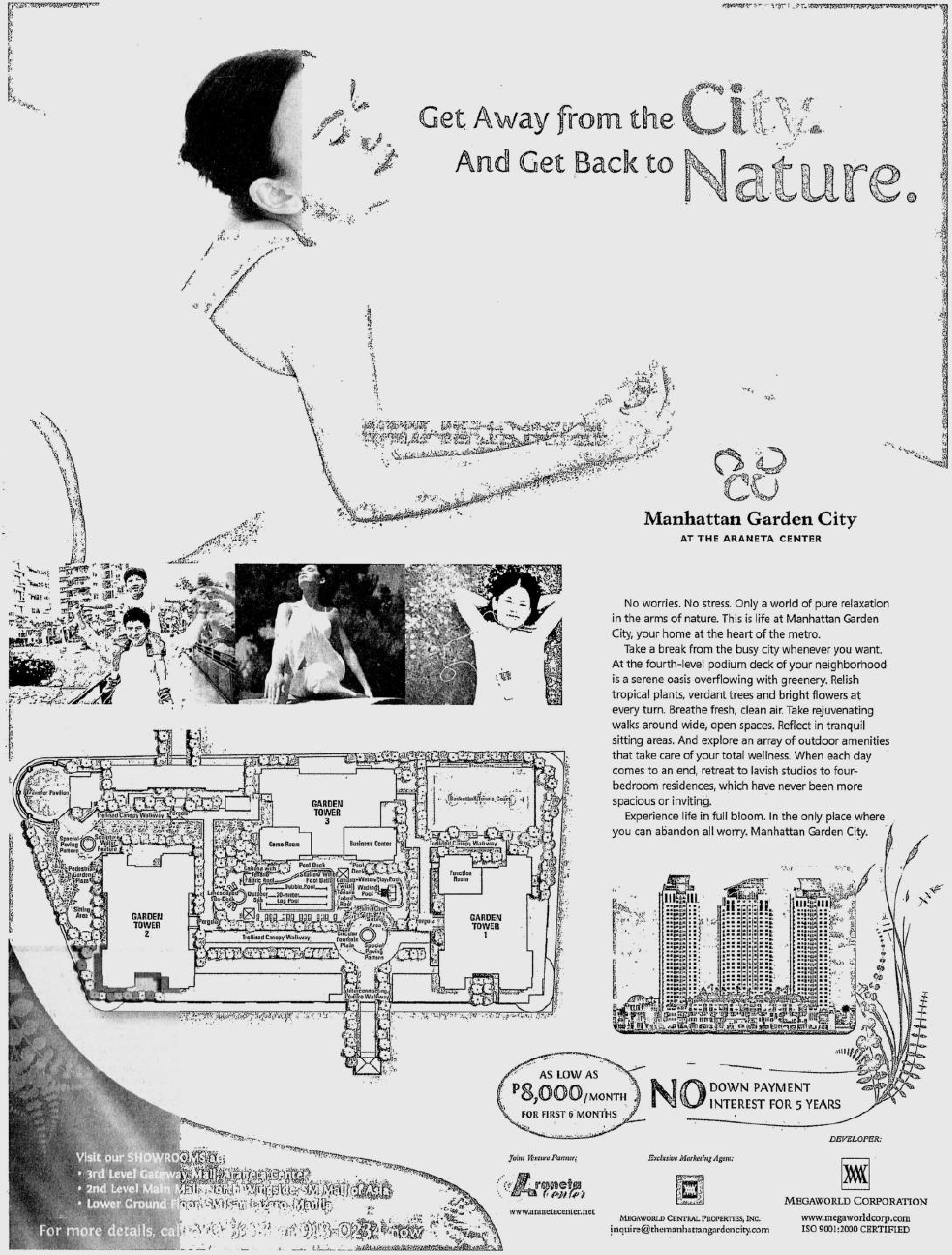
IT IS A KNOWN FACT that landscaping can help make one's front or backyard more beautiful.

But more importantly, landscaping one's yard with plants can help minimize the bad effects of pollution as well as soak up heat from the air and release water vapor that acts as a coolant.

"A lot of homeowners tend to dismiss the importance of landscaping, with some of them even think that it is a waste of money. But for those who do, the rewards are priceless," said landscape artist Lorenz Inos Jr.

He said that even a front yard with limited space could still benefit from landscaping.

LANDSCAPING/ B3-2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LIVING ARCHITECTURE

Marcos de Guzman Jr.

THESE DAYS, WE HAVE TO PAY A STEEP price for cool, comfortable air. There is a crucial need for methods to reengineer our homes to keep them comfortable without having to break the bank. The answer, of course, is to turn to natural ventilation.

Natural ventilation is the process of admitting outdoor air into the building and removing ventilated air. A good design will facilitate the continuous replenishment of fresh air in order to produce a pleasant, comfortable, and healthy indoor condition.

Warm air has lower density and is thus more buoyant, enabling it to rise above cold air. Colder air can be drawn inside the building by studying wind direction and harnessing its flow. Designers can explore the possibility of admitting cool air from lower level openings and exhaust hot air through upper openings.

Continuous airflow circuit

One way to achieve this is by having tall and narrow windows. The cooler air outdoors enters from below. The hot stale air within the room emitted by occupants and by equipment would then find an escape in the upper portion of the window. This stack effect increases as temperature difference widens.

This technique is also more effective the greater the difference is between the upper and lower openings. You may likewise achieve the same effect by designing operable transoms above the doors. The idea is to create a continuous airflow circuit by strategically locating and designing openings for both supply and exhaust air movements.

Preference for large windows continues to be a popular request among clients. However, it is also good to note the advantages of having tall and narrow windows. One of these is that it does not compromise privacy.

At the same time, parents are more at ease for the safety of their young children. The reliance on grilles for security would then be less necessary. This also minimizes the need for window treatments to shield from glare and intense heat, which can even be the cause of the discoloration of interior furnishing.

Natural ventilation

Solar gain is kept to a minimum, which reduces the amount of heat that needs to be vented out. More blank walls, rather than windows, provide more flexibility in planning and repositioning furniture layout. In cases when there are no premium outdoor views, limiting window locations to strategic places will also result to construction cost savings.

When openings are parallel to the wind direction, natural ventilation can still be adapted through the concept of "scooping" the air toward the interior of the building. Analyze actual wind direction prior to the fabrication of windows. The idea is to "scoop" the air in by installing the hinges at the appropriate side. The key to this technique is careful observation.

By making the best use of natural ventilation, we can reduce and minimize the use of mechanically operated ventilators. This results to significant construction and operation cost savings, as well as lessened energy consumption. Often, the best solutions to our building problems can be found in the basic tenets of nature. Again, we rediscover that, indeed, the best air in life is free.

Please send your comments through marcosdeguzman@yahoo.com.

Owning a home made easy with Eton Properties' Home 838

FOR MOST OF US, HAVING A HOME OF one's own can be the fulfillment of a lifetime dream. Whether it's a unit in a high-rise residential building or a house in a growing community in the suburbs, the home remains a concrete symbol and statement of one's success.

Property developers usually come up with financing schemes that allow people to fulfill their dream of having their very own homes. But because purchasing a home is a big investment, today's buyers not only choose a place they are truly interested in, but also place their trust in property developers that can help them get this through comfortable payment terms.

One such developer is Eton Properties Philippines Inc. The real estate arm of the Lucio Tan Group of Companies, Eton Properties has teamed up with sister company Allied Bank to introduce the most affordable home financing plan for Eton clients.

Longer payment terms

Eton Properties' Home 838 financing program provides for longer payment terms with a fixed interest rate of 8.38 percent for 10 years—to date, the lowest in the industry. Not only does Eton Properties provide the lowest interest rate, it also lets clients choose from down payment schemes as low as 20 or even 10 percent, and payment terms as long as 20 years. Imagine, paying only P9,000 a month to finally have your own home.

Initially, Eton Properties' Home 838 was offered exclusively to buyers of Eton Emerald Lofts, Eton Properties' twin-tower all-loft residential condominium in Ortigas Center. It certainly makes the dream of loft living within reach, especially for young business professionals who see lofts as the fashionable and stylish residence of choice.

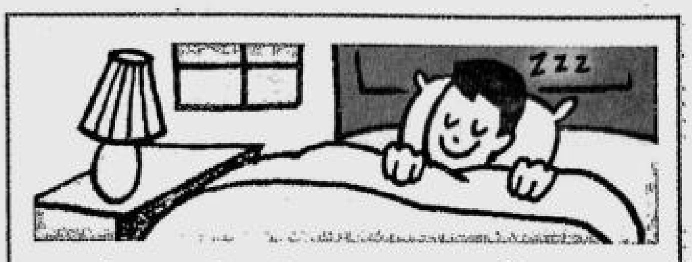
Eton Emerald Lofts is the perfect choice as it provides the ultimate in leisure being surrounded by top lifestyle destinations like Shangri-La Plaza Mall, The Podium, SM Megamall and Robinsons Galleria.

For 2 other top dev'ts

Now, this great financing scheme from Eton Properties is also offered for two other top developments of Eton Properties. Buyers can choose from Belton Place, a prime corner on Pasong Tamo, steps away from Ayala and Buendia avenues and One Archers Place, a residential development near Dela Salle University in Manila.

With the combined strength of Eton Properties and Allied Bank and the backing of one of the country's biggest and well-established conglomerates, Eton Properties is poised to become one of the leading real estate developers in the country. Truly, it is ready to fulfill the Filipinos' dream of having a home their own.

To know more about Home 838, visit www.eton.com.ph or call 845-3866.



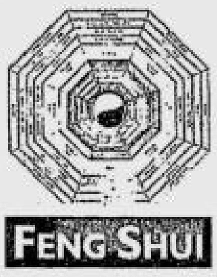
Attaining perfect harmony, balance in the bedroom

By Tess S. Samaniego

A BEDROOM IS PROBABLY one of the most important areas of a house since this is where you can be alone with your thoughts and, at the same time, be with someone more intimately.

As though a personal sanctuary, bedrooms also allow one to relax, recharge and rejuvenate for the next day.

For these reasons, it is thus important for bedrooms to be able to promote harmonious flow of "nourishing and sensual energy," according to Rodika Tchi, principal of Tchi Consulting, a professional feng shui consulting firm.



"A good bedroom is a room that invites you, lures you in, excites and calms at the same time," Tchi says.

Simple, practical tips

So to attain that "perfect state of harmony and balance in the bedroom," Tchi offers a few simple, practical feng shui tips you may follow.

- Let go of the TV, computer or exercise equipment. Good feng shui energy is destroyed when these electronic items are present in the bedroom.
- Open the windows to keep air fresh and full of oxygen. You cannot have good feng shui if the air in your room is stale and full of pollutants. Also, plants in the bedroom are not good feng shui, unless bedroom is fairly large and plants are located far from the bed.
- Make several levels of lighting available or use a dimmer switch to adjust the energy accordingly. Since light is the strongest manifestation of energy, good, appropriate lighting is very important. However, candles are the most recommended bedroom lighting, but be sure to buy candles with no toxins.
- Use soothing colors to achieve a good feng shui balance in bedroom. Best feng shui colors for the bedroom are the so-called "skin colors" which vary from pale white to rich chocolate brown. Choose colors within this range that will work best for your bedroom decor.
- Choose the images for your bedroom wisely, because images carry powerful feng shui energy. Choose images that you want to see happening in your life. Unless you enjoy being sad and lonely, do not use these images in your bedroom.

Tchi adds that one should also take note of bed positions. Beds should be easily approachable from both sides. Feng shui also recommends to have two bedside tables (one on each side) and to avoid having the bed in a direct line with the door.

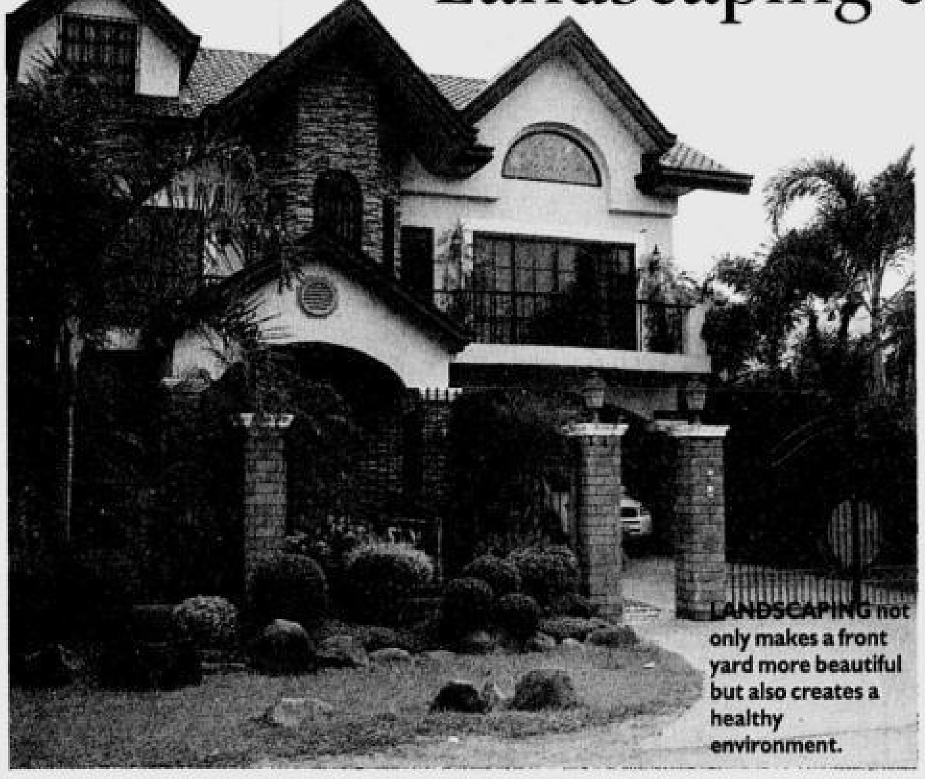
"A good looking and well-balanced bed is important in creating a perfect feng shui bedroom. Good mattress, solid headboard and high-quality sheets from natural fibers are likewise important in creating harmonious feng shui energy," Tchi notes.

She also advises to keep all bedroom doors closed at night—be it the closet doors, the en-suite bathroom door or the bedroom door—as this will allow the best and most nourishing flow of energy to strengthen your physical health, as well as the health of your relationship.

(Source: http:// fengshui.about.com)

Landscaping could benefit any space . . .

From page B3-1



LANDSCAPING not only makes a front yard more beautiful but also creates a healthy environment.

Such was the case of his most recent client, Teresita Perez-Villanueva of Cabanatuan City, Nueva Ecija.

A way to go around

"Her 23 square-meter front yard may seem limited in terms of space. However, there's always a way to go around this challenge," said Inos of his client who, together with her husband Nelson, owns Pervil Cosmetics Philippines.

He said he needed to use plants of the right size (Phoenix palms, bromeliads, ferns), placing them properly so that the garden will not look crowded or cluttered.

The self-taught landscape artist gets his plants, rocks and garden equipment in a family-owned production nursery in Cabanatuan City and a garden center in Talavera.

Koi pond

"I decided to also add koi pond and waterfall so the family could sit quietly in the front lawn, listening to the trickling water while watching the gleaming koi slide gracefully in the water," Inos described.

FOR INOS (left), a koi pond water and garden provide Villanueva and her children a great way to relax.

Inos believes that he is not only creating a pond but a miniature world of water, plants and animals.

"Location of the pond is crucial as it should be in harmony with the surroundings (visible from inside the house), have subtle lighting for 24-hour appreciation, and include a pleasant place to sit nearby (a bridge was created and it was built in front of the lawn)," he added.

Movement and sound

Inos also added that waterfall gives movement and sound to the place while the swaying palms and their rustling leaves complement the lively atmosphere.

"I also had to source out natural rocks to surround the pond as well as driftwood and weathered railroad ties (traviezas) for the perimeter wall and a mini bridge," Inos said.

Villanueva agreed saying that she enjoys feeding the fish as well as the textures and colors of the plants as they are very relaxing and a great stress reliever.

"The garden complements our new home. Considering that a huge part of our home is devoted to our business (product preparation and storage) it's nice to have a portion of the house where we could momentarily forget our business engagements and for a change, unwind and enjoy life.

Philconstruct '07 draws big crowd at World Trade Center

PHILCONSTRUCT 2007 (17TH PHILIPPINE International Construction Equipment & Building Materials Exhibition & Technology Forum) incorporating Mining Asia '07 and Modern Home Expo '07, was packed all throughout the days it was open to the public. Some 60,000 trade buyers from all over the country and around the region trooped to the World Trade Center.

The show had over 700 booths and over 100 machines on display outdoors, with over 500 exhibitors representing products and services from 25 countries with foreign groups and product representations were from China, Germany, Italy, Korea, Malaysia, Singapore, Taiwan, United States and the United Kingdom.

"We have achieved our goal. The visitors came, the buyers made their decisions and our exhibitors reported on-site sales worth over US$50 million to be achieved within the next six months. Practically all parts of the country were represented at the show, clearly indicating that Philconstruct is without a doubt the industry's most important event," said Jorge Consunji, president of the Philippine Constructors Association, the organizer of the show.

A very timely event

With the Philippine construction industry in the middle of an investment boom, increasing number of vital private and government projects, infrastructure developments, housing, influx of foreign remittance and trade and commercial developments are in the pipeline. Today over 65 percent of all the government and private projects are with the PCA members, thus making Philconstruct a very timely event.

"The overall effectiveness of Philconstruct as a commercial platform has once again been reaffirmed by a strong return of repeat exhibitors. Seventy percent of the space were taken up by stalwart supporters who are coming back to build stronger partnerships and business ties while garnering more trade opportunities with industry players, indicating that top-line trade buyers only come to Philconstruct," said Eric Cruz, event chair and PCA first vice president.

Philconstruct and Mining Asia also received support from a record number of sponsors that included Artes Myer, Bisazza, Boysen, Carlson Trading, Cemex, Cobankiat Hardware, Davies Paints, Flowcrete, HCG, Holcim Phils., Ind'l Surface, Infratex, Lafarge, JAC, Lexton Comm, Manila Sources, Mariwasa, Maxima/Komatsu, Mega Systems, Monark Equipment, Multistiq, Norde Int'l, Panasonic, Pars Builders, Power Systems, Puyat Steel, Robert Bosch and Wilcon Builders.

Working extra hard

With attendance reaching record numbers, PCA has also been working extra hard to tie up with various organizations to ensure its continuing growth and overall show success. Having venture with these organizations will surely result in more activities, technical seminars, product presentations, design contests and added exposure ensuring that the biggest and top construction executives and decision makers will continue to choose Philconstruct as the top industry destination.

"Philconstruct has basically doubled its total size in the last three years and we are expecting to double it once again in the next three years reaching 1,400 exhibitors and 30,000 square meters of exhibition space. The Philippine economy is headed toward sustainable growth in the next 10 years and with the influx of foreign and local investments, we believe that Philconstruct will become one of the largest and most dynamic construction events in the region and PCA is completely committed to achieving such goals," Cruz added.

Philconstruct 2008 will be held from Nov. 13 to 16 in the SMX Convention Center, which will allow PCA to double the size of its show.

Graphics Design Alden Joshua Cedo

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Las Palmas Hotel Manila
1616 A. Mabini St., Malate, Manila
Tel. 521-1000/ Fax 523-6917
www.laspalmashotel.com.ph

Mactan Island Resort
Punta Engano Road, Lapu Lapu Cebu
Tel. 231-0288/Fax 231-1688
www.shangri-la.com

The Peninsula Manila
Corner of Ayala and Makati Avenues,
Makati City
Tel: 887 2888 Fax: 815 4825

Palm Plaza Hotel
Pedro Gil corner M. Adriatico Sts., Ma
Tel. 522-1000 Fax 525-8013
www.palmplazahotel.com

Pryce Plaza
Carmen Hill, Cagayan de Oro City Phil.
Tel. (088) 858-4536-37 Fax : (8822) 726687
Email: reservations@pryceplaza.ph

The Regent Hotel
Elias, Angeles St., Naga City
Tel. (6354) 4722626 / Fax (6354) 4722525

The Marco Polo
CM Recto St. Davao City 8000
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Makati Palace Hotel
P. Burgos cor. Caceres St., Makati City
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www.makatipalacehotel.com.ph
info@makatipalacehotel.com.ph

SUMMER PLACE HOTEL

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Tel. :(074) 446.0560, 446.5400-01
www.SummerPlaceBaguio.com

Mallberry Suites Business Hotel
Limketkai Center Florentino Street
Cagayan De Oro City
Tel.(088)855-7999

Ascott Makati
Glorietta 4, Ayala Center
Makati City, 1224 Phil.
Tel. (63.2) 729-8888 Fax (632) 728-0000
www.the-ascott.com

Somerset Salcedo, Makati
H.V. dela Costa St., cor. L.P. Levista St.,
Salcedo Village, 1227 Makati City
Tel. 888-6668 Fax: 888-6655

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No. 104 Aguirre St., Legaspi Village, 1229
Makati City
Tel. 888-0505 Fax: 812-7721

Somerset Olympia, Makati
No. 7912, Makati Ave., 1220 Makati City
Tel. 812-1010 Fax: 818-8254

The Bellevue Manila
North Bridgeway, Northgate
Alabang, Muntinlupa
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www.thebellevue.com

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www.waterfronthotels.com.ph

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107 Dela Rosa St.
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723-9181

Caliraya Recreation Center
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www.abgroup.com.ph

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Century Park Hotel
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Telefax 528-1811
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http://manila.dusit.com

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manila.casino.hyatt.com

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www.subiclegend.com

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Makati City
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www.oxfordsuitesmakati.com

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parqueespana@hil.com.ph
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taalvista@fuegohotels.com

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Bo. Matain, Subic Zambales
Tel. 421 - 2781-82
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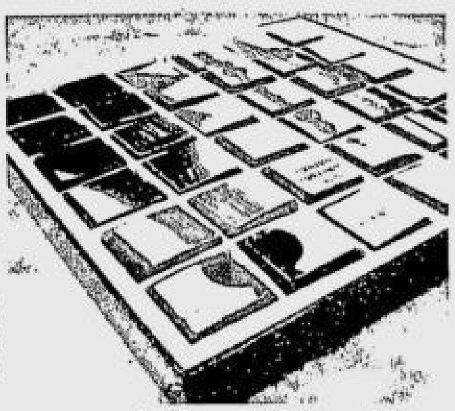
Opulent chocolate impressions

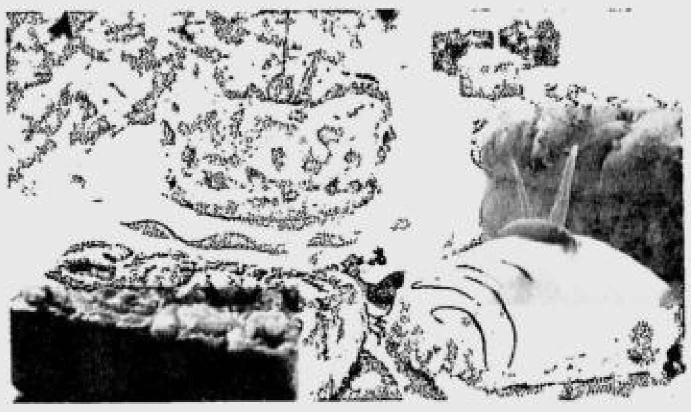


A BOX OF COLOURFUL, flavourful and fun tailor-made chocolate pralines is the perfect Christmas corporate this yuletide season. Make a unique impression by personalizing your chocolate treats with your company logo, tagline or special message intended for a valued client or even a loved one.

Pastry chef Johann has created these home-made chocolate pralines with two layers of gingerbread filled with apricot jelly, topped with a layer of sweet marzipan and dipped in dark Couverture chocolate, guaranteed to make the recipient beam with Christmas joy. Edible illustrations of Christmas artworks have been placed on top for a colourful, visual treat. And there's more… look out for the flavours of spices, such as cinnamon, nutmeg and more, added generously to the pralines to complete the festive taste sensation.

So, express your creativity and gratitude with a box of Opulent Chocolate Impressions, custom-made to suit your personal and/or corporate needs. These thoughtful surprises are available only at the Pastry Boutique located at Hyatt Hotel and Casino Manila.

For inquiries call 245 1234.



A trove of tasty Christmas treats at The Richmonde Lobby Café

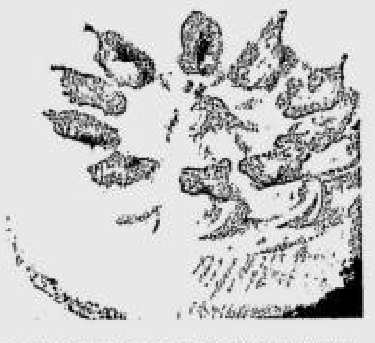
EXPECT A TREASURE TROVE filled with mouth-watering goodies, all sprinkled with delightful flavors and warm holiday cheer, at the Richmonde Hotel's Lobby Café starting Nov. 19.

Satisfy your sweet cravings or offer a delightful surprise to loved ones with lip-smacking holiday pastries such as luscious cake variations like Dulce de Leche Cheese Mini Cake (P95/pc), Christmas Chocolate Mini Cake (P90/pc), Banana Choco Caramel Torte (190/pc) and Holiday Carrot Log (P220/pc) and a tasty assortment of bread creations like Danish Fruit Ring (P185/pc), Pistachio Cream Cheese Bread (P165/pc), Langka & Raisin Bread (P145/pc) and Cinnamon Walnut Buns (P140/box). These delectable items available only this season also come in holiday boxes trimmed with ribbons and other charming Yuletide trappings.

So take your pick from among these divine delicacies and make your Christmas yummier and merrier. Visit the Goodie Counter located at the Hotel's lobby and sample these choice Yuletide offerings available until Jan. 1, 2008. You can also choose from among the all-time Lobby Café favorites such as Ensaymada, Choco Moist Cake, Nutty Fudge Square and a whole lot more.

For your orders or inquiries, please call 638-7777 extension 3732. Bulk orders should be placed two days in advance.

Hummingbird Cake at the Bellevue



TASTE THE SWEET SENSATION of the Bellevue's Cake of the Month this November. Savour and relish in the Hummingbird Cake's rich, bountiful and aromatic blend of grated carrot, walnut and figs topped with cream cheese frosting decorated with caramelized figs. Enjoy this sweet and unique symphony of taste as you nurse a cup of coffee at the Bellevue's Pastry Corner or bring a box whole for the whole family. Meanwhile, Bellevue's 20/20 Bar, the hottest haunt south of the Metro, treats ladies to an enjoyable and unforgettable evening of partying. Every Wednesday for the month of November, ladies will have the privilege of an evening of free featured drinks and waived minimum consumable charges. For the men, every night is a night of enjoyment and merrymaking with unlimited beer for only P500. While enjoying your drinks, you can sing with the 20/20 Bar's Videoke Nights on Mondays, swoon to The Brothers' tunes on Tuesdays and listen to Joey Bautista's rhythms on Wednesdays. Thursdays are for the musical stylings of Spread the Love, Fridays for Tribe of Levi's rocking rhymes while Saturdays are for Ballroom Dancing. For inquiries, call 771-8181.

G Hotel Manila by Waterfront turns one

G HOTEL MANILA BY WATERFRONT, THE FIRST-EVER 50-ROOM BOUTIQUE hotel in the Philippines, celebrates its first anniversary this month. It's been exactly one year since the posh hotel opened its doors to the public. As a treat to guests, G Hotel celebrates with a special anniversary rate of: P3,400 for a Deluxe Single; P3,900 for a Deluxe Double and P5,000 for a Deluxe Suite. These special rates include buffet breakfast at Café Noir, a G Hotel personalized card holder, and your choice of spa fragrance for your room. The rates are also inclusive of WiFi access in the lobby, guest rooms and restaurants, access to the swimming pool, as well as major discounts: 20 percent off in hotel coffee shop Café Noir and the hip Mirage; and 15 percent off in laundry and Business Center services. The anniversary rate is available from Nov. 20 until Jan. 20, 2008. The year that was has placed G Hotel Manila in the map of businessmen and small convention groups. People keep coming back for the twenty-four hour butler service. This hotel has pinned this art down to a T. For inquiries and reservations, please contact 525-0888, or e-mail g.hotel@waterfronthotels.net. G Hotel Manila by Waterfront is located at 2090 Roxas Boulevard, Malate, Manila.

Dusit Hotel Nikko celebrates 'Loy Krathong'

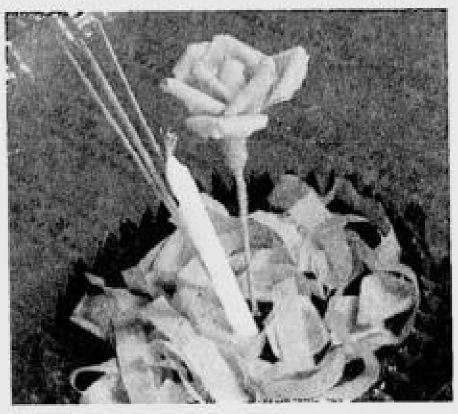
CELEBRATE AND EXPERIENCE THAILAND's most picturesque festival from Nov. 24 to Dec. 5 at Dusit Hotel Nikko.

Enjoy and indulge on various famous specialty dishes for lunch and dinner while being entertained with live traditional music and dance from Nov. 25 to Dec. 4 at the newly refurbished Benjarong Royal Thai restaurant.

Come and join a unique Thai festivity "Loy Krathong" at the Poolside on Nov. 24, 7 p.m. for only P1,200net per person. This includes dinner, special show and floating your own beautiful krathong.

Every November, during the thirteenth full moon of the year, the "Loy Krathong" Festival is held. Krathongs, along with a candle, are fixed colorful flowers, incense sticks and some coins are added. Although a festival of fun and enjoyment, the highlight and purpose of this event is focused around the actual setting adrift of the krathong. With great sincerity, each person respectfully holds the krathong, offer prayers and in releasing it into the night, it is also a farewell to their sins and any bad luck of the past year.

This event is made possible with the support and cooperation of the Tourism Authority of Thailand, Thai Airways and Best World Beverages.



Paskong Pinoy at Palaisdaan Resto

IT'S GOING TO BE A VERY PINOY CHRISTMAS at Palaisdaan Restaurant, Quezon province's premiere country dining restaurant located in the City of Tayabas, as a group of serenaders welcomes diners with the rousing song "Ang Pasko ay Sumapit".

For this Yuletide Season, Kuwerdas ng Tayabas, one of the best string bands in the province, will serenade guests and diners of Palaisdaan Restaurant with Filipino Christmas carols that will surely bring back joyful memories of past holiday celebrations in the countryside. Diners can also request kundiman and even timeless English classics of their choice.

To make this event more Pinoy, Rene de los Santos, manager of Palaisdaan Restaurant, and his team of traditionally trained cooks have prepared favorite country staples like pasulbot, kalamay and tikoy. These are different types of Christmas cakes made from a sticky variety of rice called malagkit that are ubiquitous in every household in Quezon province come Christmastime.

For a truly authentic feel of Pinoy Christmas in the countryside, an actual demonstration of cooking pasulbot and kalamay can be made by a special request arranged at least 3 days in advance.

The distinctive aroma of kalamay making and the rousing Yuletide tune of Kuwerdas in Tayabas amid the idyllic ambiance of Mt. Banahaw makes Palaisdaan Restaurant truly the place to experience Pinoy Christmas at its best.

For inquiries and reservations, please call (042)793-3524 or visit www.palaisdaan.com.ph.

Baccarat AsiaSpa Awards cites Chi, The Spa

CHI, THE SPA AT SHANGRI-LA - SHANGRI-LA'S SIGNATURE SPA brand - was awarded "Spa Marketing of the Year" at the Baccarat AsiaSpa Awards, while the Jade Journey therapy from Chi at Pudong Shangri-La, Shanghai was acclaimed as the "Spa Treatment of the Year." Chi, The Spa received a total of eight nominations. The results were determined by a panel of 28 Asia-based spa industry expert judges selected by AsiaSpa magazine. Introduced in June 2007, the Jade Journey uses jade pieces and Chinese massage techniques drawn from ancient healing traditions to release blockages in meridian points throughout the body. The one-hour-forty-minute journey includes a Jade Foot Bath, a Tea Bath Ritual followed by traditional Chinese guasha (stroking) movements using jade stones to harmonize the yin and yang of the body. The Chi concept is to create a sanctuary of tranquillity inspired by the legend of "Shangri-La," high in the mystical Himalayan mountains. The Chi spa philosophy is based on the fusing of ancient traditions, beliefs and rituals from China and the Himalayas, while featuring some of the largest and most luxurious private spa suites and villas in their markets. Nine Chi are open today, in Bangkok, Cebu, Shanghai, Penang, Muscat, Beijing, Guangzhou and Chengdu, with 21 spas scheduled to open in the next five years.

DISCOVERY SUITES TREATS INDIGENT KIDS
Children from Nayon ng Kabataan were treated to a fun-filled day as special guests of Discovery Suites' 'Bewitched' Halloween Party recently. Nayon ng Kabataan (The Village for the Youth) is the National Centre for neglected, exploited, abused, abandoned, and orphaned children under the Department of Social Welfare and Development. Built in 1968, the facility seeks to care, rehabilitate and protect children with the end goal of reintegrating them to their families and communities. The Village provides a comprehensive package of social services which includes home life services, training on productivity skills, medical, health and educational services, and legal assistance. Wards of Nayon ng Kabataan, shown in photo with Discovery Suites GM Bobby Horrigan were accorded VIP privileges and had full access to all of the hotel's Halloween activities like face-painting, a sumptuous brunch, parlor games, and Halloween gift packs from sponsors. They also enjoyed front row seats to the magic show by the talented Master Dem, courtesy of Viva Video, Country Style, Paracetamol Biogesic for Kids, Jack n' Jill, Mentos, Monde, Star Fruits, Star Pops, Magnolia and Jellyace.

Conway's Bar
813 8888 ext. 7026

Mey Lin Pot & Noodle House
899 6688 / 899 8999

Tony Roma's Restaurants
757 1926 / 771 1388

Island Foot & Body Wellness
899 1234 / 751 8296

Cafe Mediterranean
Greenbelt
894-4032

Bo's Coffee Club

The Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf

Causeway Seafood Restaurant
24 Timog Ave, Q.C.
376-2559

Clawdaddy Crabhouse and American Grill
636-5679

Heaven 'n Eggs
(02)818-2792
(02)889-3791

Kalye Juan
0920-94-kalye

Sushi-Ya
0917-84-sushi

Tong Yang Shabu-Shabu & BBQ Restaurant
899 3388 / 897 4148

Palaisdaan Restaurant
Barangay Dapdap, Tayabas, Quezon
(042) 793-3529

Lola Maria Coffeeshop
60 Pioneer St.
Mandaluyong City
633-1501 to 10

Fj's Grill
24 Timog Ave, Q.C.
376-2559

The Old Spaghetti House
687-6630

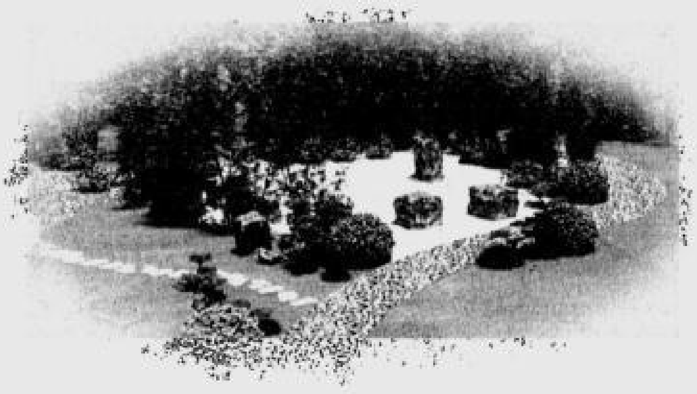
North Park
73737

MUSEUM CAFÉ
Ayala Museum, Greenbelt 4
757-3000
757-6000

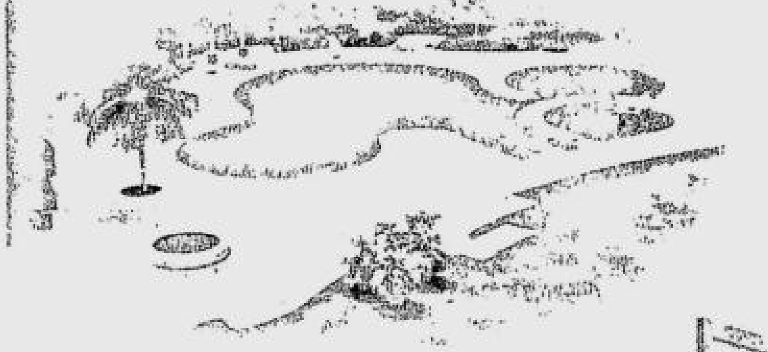
Finio Restaurant
415-1278

Kopiroti Davao
(082)3016009

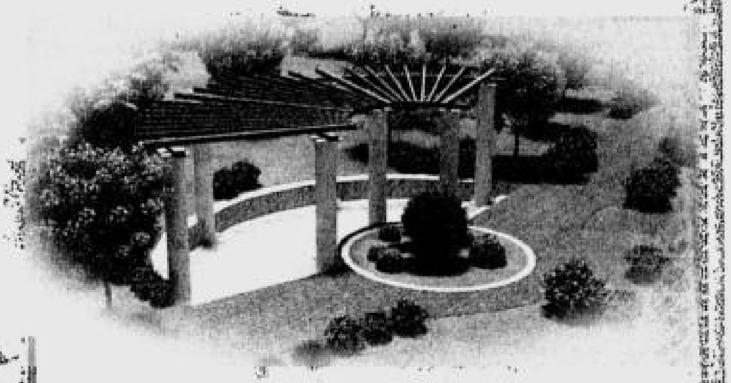
Chelsea Market & Cafe
909-7011
909-7012



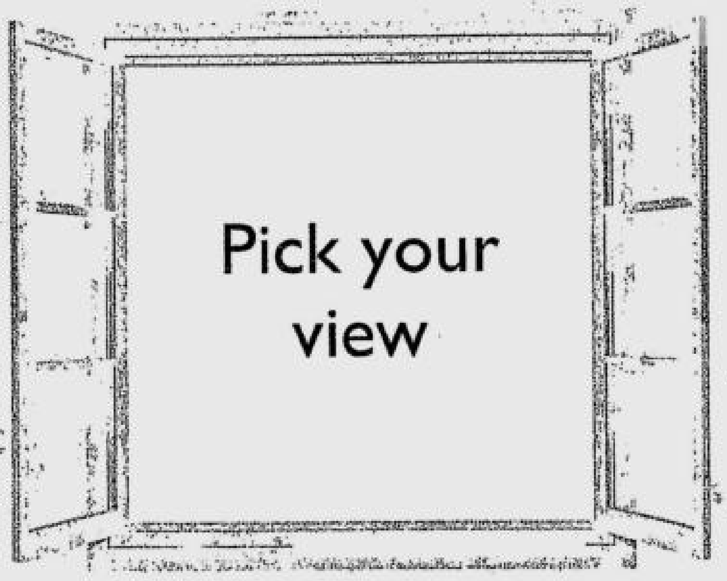
Nirvana Cove



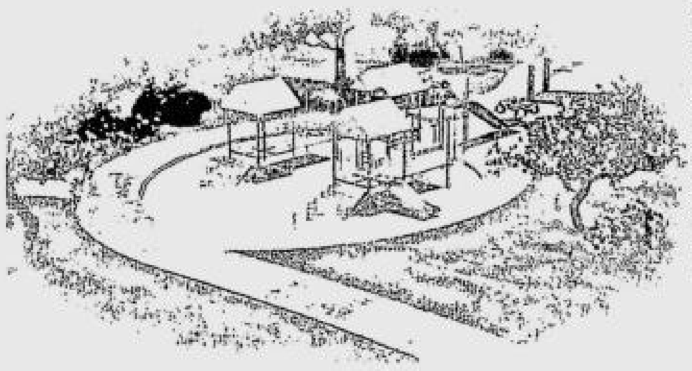
The Oasis



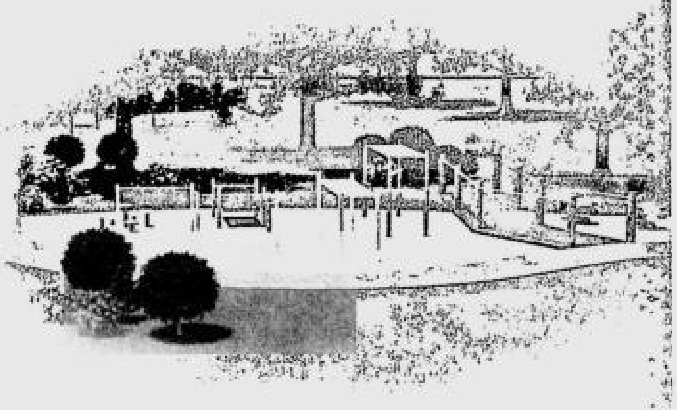
Poet's Nook



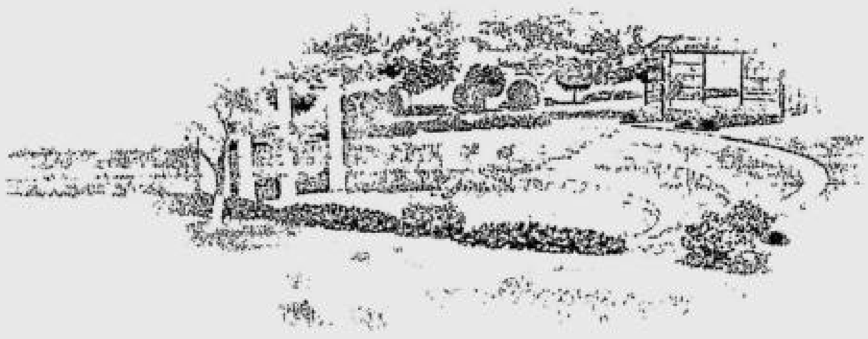
Pick your view



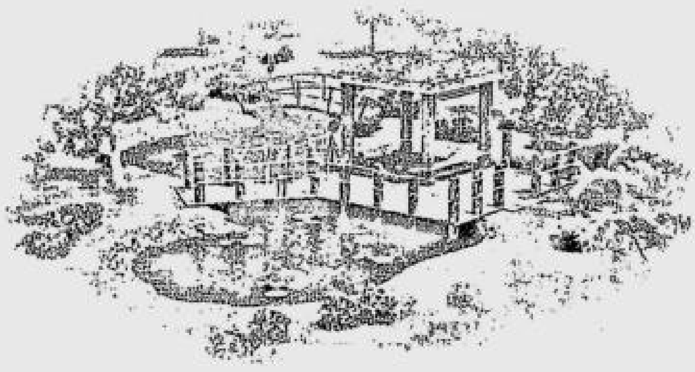
Fun Park



Muscle Cove



Nature's Orchestra



Picnic Groove

Whatever your taste, you'll find yourself at home in Woodsville Viverde Mansions located at the heart of Merville, Parañaque. With 70% open spaces featuring 7 nature-themed landscaped gardens equipped with various amenities and a village mall, there's something to suit every lifestyle. So when you consider that it's only a 10-minute drive from Makati, the hardest decision is picking the view you like most.

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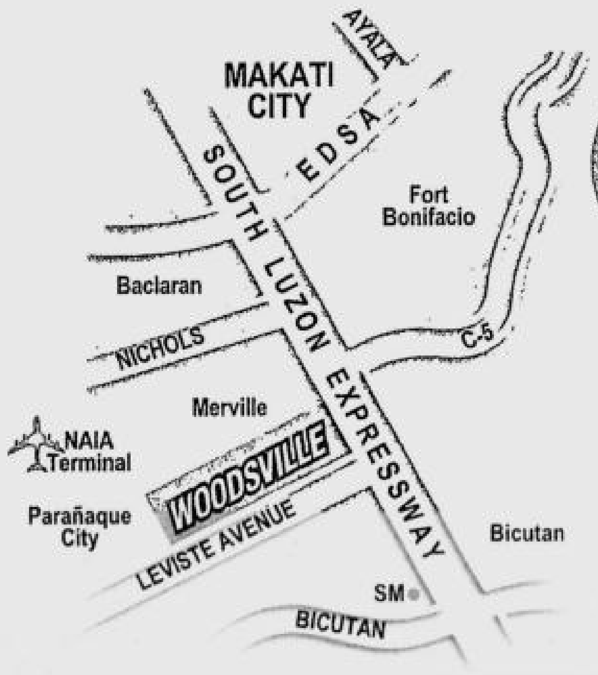
Get your unit for as low as P13,700 per Month for a 2-BR with ***SUPER EASY HOME*** financing plan.
For more information, call Robinsons Land Corporation at 395-2765 and 0922-8380888 or email properties@robinsonsland.com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SHOOT WITH SUPER

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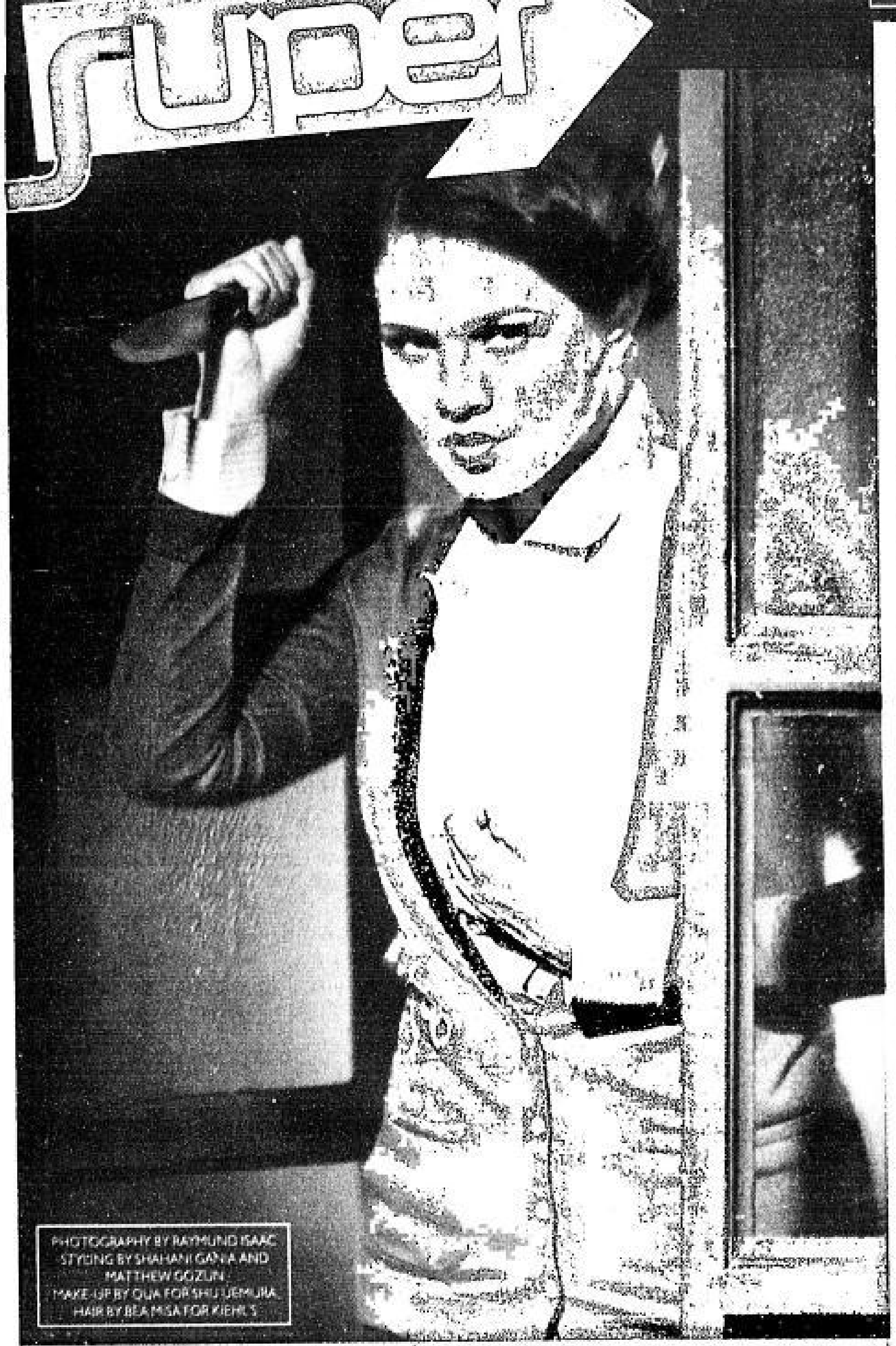

PHOTOGRAPHY BY RAYMUND ISAAC
STYLING BY SHAHANI GANIA AND MATTHEW GOZUN
MAKE-UP BY QUA FOR SHU UEMURA
HAIR BY BEA MISA FOR KIEHL'S

Hollywood knocking

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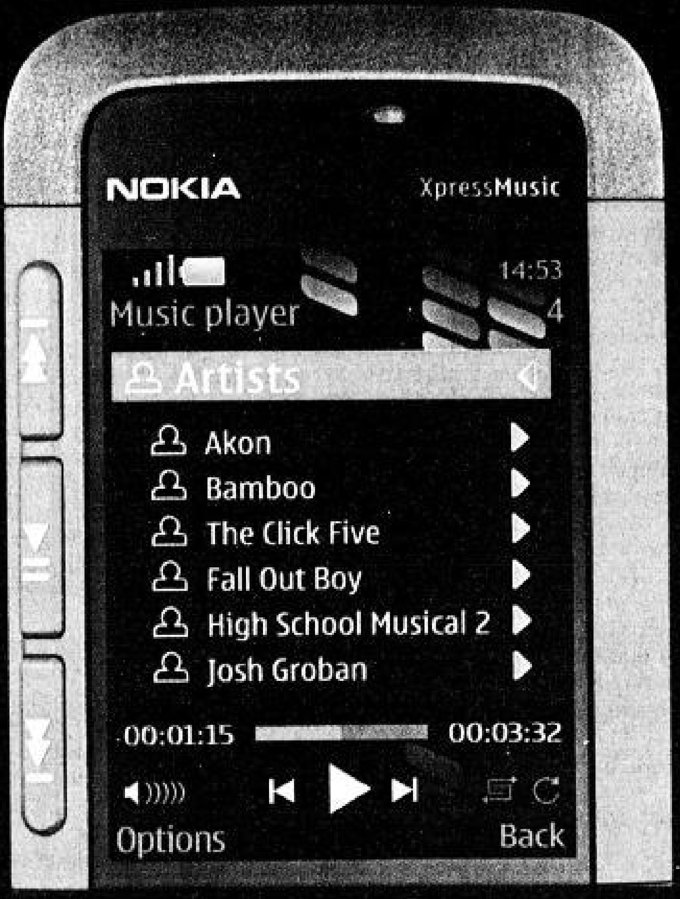
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Hollywood knocking

By Wanggo Gallaga

SEQ. 01 DAY/INT Raymund Isaac's studio

IZA CALZADO IS SITTING ON THE make-up chair as the make-up artist and the hair stylist transforms her from a lovely young lady into a Hollywood star in the vein of Janet Leigh, Veronica Lake or Grace Kelly. Raymund Isaac has left his iPod on, playing dance songs to fill the studio..

Iza

Gelli de Belen told me when this Echo thing came out, "*Bawal ka mag*-complain, *bawal ka mapagod. Wala kang karapatan mag-reklamo!*".

Iza laughs.

Caster's Notes:

Iza Calzado is one of the most electrifying actresses in the industry today. Hit soap after hit soap, film role after memorable film role, Iza is a malleable star capable of handling whatever is thrown her way. A competent dramatic actress, we've seen her deliver with convincing aplomb in television soap operas like "Impostora" and Maging Sino Ka Man." She's done drama and action in the fantastical "Encantadia" and "Atlantika." In films, she's been able to flex more of those impressive acting chops playing a broken woman in "Milan," a madwoman in "Blackout," someone fooled into becoming a sex worker in Singapore in "Mona" and an abused and battered wife in "Sigaw."

While very capable of dealing with all the heavy emotions she must convey in her roles, she's quite bubbly in person. She's a genuine sweetheart. In fact, people having nothing but nice things to say about her. She teases the make-up artist as they are introduced and when she sees Raymund, they openly talk about their last shoot together.

SEQ. 02 DAY/INT RAYMUND ISAAC'S STUDIO

Inter-changing close-ups between Iza and the interviewer

Interviewer

What made you want to be an actor?

Iza

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When I tried it out and I started to take it seriously that's when I really tried to learn and focus. I had a chance to work with great directors; they would always encourage me, that's when I realized "Oh my gosh! I like what I'm doing."

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Iza is definitely someone to watch out for. In fact, "Sigaw" made such a noise (get it?) that it was bought by Vertigo Entertainment ("The Invasion," "The Grudge," "Lake House") to be turned into the Hollywood film "The Echo" starring Jesse Bradford ("Bring It On," "Flags of Our Fathers") and directed by the original director Yam Laranas. Yam Laranas fought for Iza Calzado to reprise her role in the film and after having flown to the US to audition, bagged it and will soon be appearing in the Hollywood version of the film.

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Close-up of Iza's face as her transformation is almost complete.

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What was it like going to Canada to shoot a Hollywood film?

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Close-up on the interviewer as he notices how articulate Iza is, answering each question completely. He barely has to ask questions. Iza quickly answers and begins to relate with a certain casual ease.

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Did you have a trailer?

Iza

Yeah, I did.

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How did you decorate it?

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ECHOES of Hollywood glam

Piggy Bank Travels

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In the city of soaring rent and unbelievably inflated prices, cheap treats for the foodie still abound

By Celine Novenario

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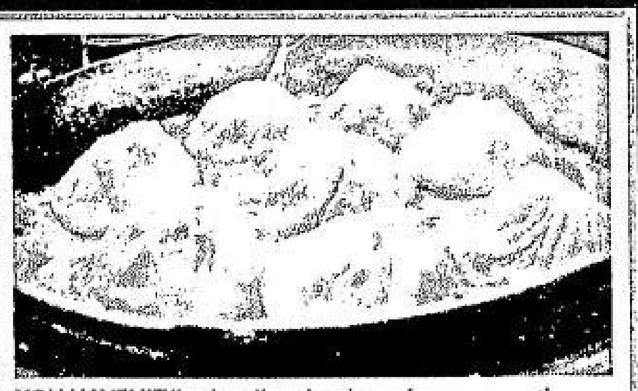

YOU HAVEN'T lived until you've slurped up a scrumptious soup dumpling at Joe's Shanghai PHOTO:PATRICIA PALMA-GIL

Shanghai Bites

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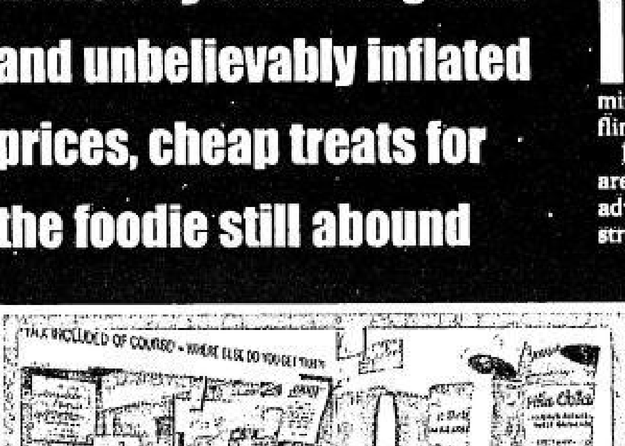
We begin in the heart of Chinatown. Here, bargains abound—but the king ain't the cheapest, it's the tastiest! You haven't lived until you've been squeezed into a table with strangers and bonded with them over your shared reverence for Joe's Shanghai soup dumplings. For $6.65 you get eight heavenly xiao lung bao filled with tender pork and crabmeat, and swimming in scrumptious steaming broth. The soup is indeed inside the dumpling so devouring one (or eight) requires some technique. But the warm fuzzy feeling you get with each delectable bite is worth every spill—and certainly every dollar!



NEW YORK'S [illegible]

Hotdog Heaven

Gray's Papaya
[illegible] 8th Ave. at 37th St. New York, NY 10018; 402 6th Ave. at 8th St., New York, NY 10014, and 2090 Broadway at 72nd St., New York, NY 10023

I was tempted to skip this one but it just didn't seem right to do a New York cheap eats roundup without naming the ubiquitous Gray's Papaya. [illegible]

Corn Ball

Café Habana
Prince at Elizabeth Streets, New York, NY 10012

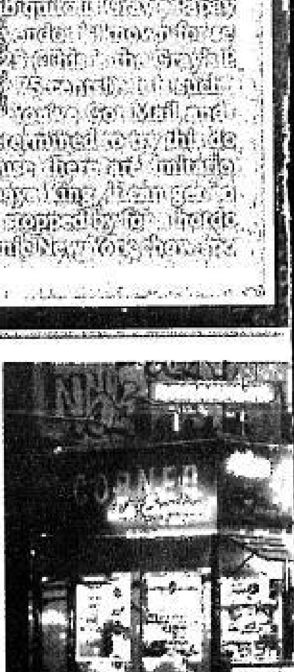
[illegible]

A TRICKED [illegible]

Midnight Pangs

La Esquina
106 Kenmare St. at Lafayette St., New York, NY 10012

Let me tell you what every truly good friend should when you are walking tipsy on the streets of Manhattan: "Step away from the halal stand." Your tastebuds may be deadened by all the Vodka Crans you've chugged but that's no reason to subject them to mystery meat that's been marinating in smog all night. Instead, end your day of food tripping with a stop at La Esquina. There's no missing the neon-lit structure standing on Kenmare St. The taqueria stays open until 5 a.m., serving seven different types of piping hot tacos priced from $3.25 to $3.95. Not quite dirt cheap, but worth every buck for the fresh ingredients and authentic recipes. The Pescado a Las Brasas taco tops most people's fave lists with its combination of grilled fish, shredded cabbage, and salsa verde enveloped in a soft corn tortilla. Another yummy pick is the Pollo Rostizado, which is a mouthwatering mix of chicken straight off the rotisserie, chopped cilantro, and salsa verde. Should the sustainance put you back in the mood for partying, you can try to weasle your way into the "employees entrance" to get to the exclusive underground speakeasy. How to get past the haughty French bouncer? That's another story.



LA ESQUINA is the go-to-spo
night, with its taqueria that's

Hollywood knocking

By Wanggo Gallaga

SEQ. 01 DAY/INT Raymund Isaac's studio

IZA CALZADO IS SITTING ON THE make-up chair as the make-up artist and the hair stylist transforms her from a lovely young lady into a Hollywood star in the vein of Janet Leigh, Veronica Lake or Grace Kelly. Raymund Isaac has left his iPod on, playing dance songs to fill the studio..

Iza

Gelli de Belen told me when this Echo thing came out, "*Bawal ka mag*-complain, *bawal ka mapagod. Wala kang karapatan mag-reklamo!*"

Iza laughs.

Caster's Notes:

Iza Calzado is one of the most electrifying actresses in the industry today. Hit soap after hit soap, film role after memorable film role, Iza is a malleable star capable of handling whatever is thrown her way. A competent dramatic actress, we've seen her deliver with convincing aplomb in television soap operas like "Impostora" and Maging Sino Ka Man." She's done drama and action in the fantastical "Encantadia" and "Atlantika." In films, she's been able to flex more of those impressive acting chops playing a broken woman in "Milan," a madwoman in "Blackout," someone fooled into becoming a sex worker in Singapore in "Mona" and an abused and battered wife in "Sigaw."

While very capable of dealing with all the heavy emotions she must convey in her roles, she's quite bubbly in person. She's a genuine sweetheart. In fact, people having nothing but nice things to say about her. She teases the make-up artist as they are introduced and when she sees Raymund, they openly talk about their last shoot together.

SEQ. 02 DAY/INT RAYMUND ISAAC'S STUDIO

Inter-changing close-ups between Iza and the interviewer

Interviewer

What made you want to be an actor?

Iza

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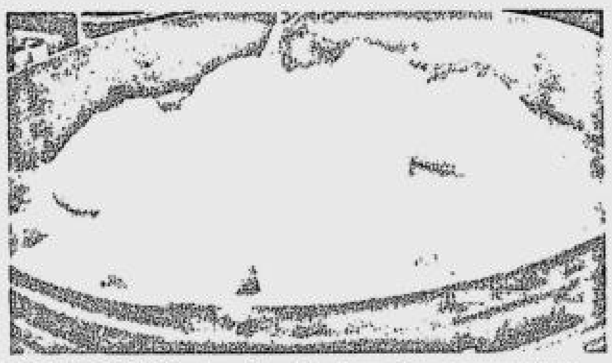

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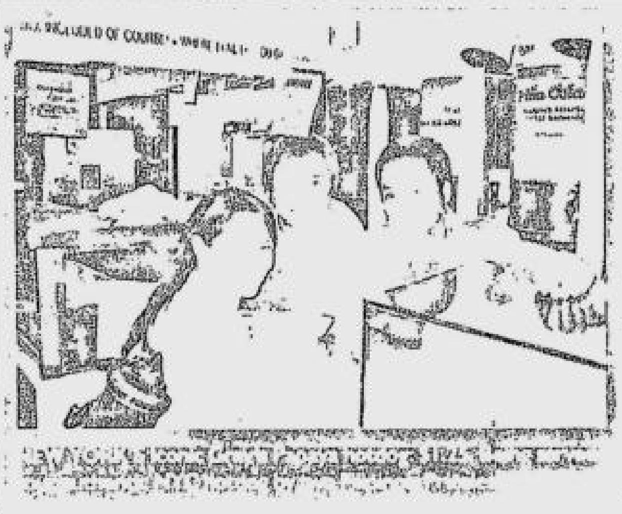

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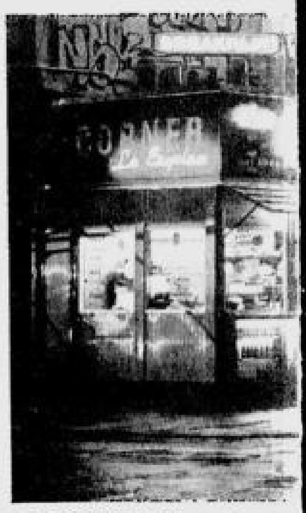


LA ESQUINA is the go-to-spo
night, with its taqueria that's

IZA'S looks could kill

sofa and it looked like an RV talaga.

Interviewer

Is Hollywood calling?

Iza

Uh ... No. Just the publicist of "The Echoes" is calling. (Laughs)

But it's hard. It's really difficult because I'm here. I just wish I had time but I really have to make money here, I haven't made soaps for awhile. I just need to be there for, maybe a month and just meet with people and I'm hoping that people will take notice of the film and they'd get interested.

Hollywood is all about networking. The last time I was there was in 2005 and so if it's about who I met and who I know, except for the people I just worked with, *walang may kilala sa akin*. I have no agent. How will I get an agent if I'm here?

I'll focus *muna* since I'm doing so much work here and when they call me because they said they were going to call me for looping or something or the premiere of "The Echo" and I know GMA will understand and let me fly out to that because I have an existing contract with them that stipulates that I will be part of the promotions and the premiere. Maybe at that time, I'll try to do something. I have one foot in the door, *ang pangit naman kung tatalikuran ko pa kung* whatever's there.

Interviewer

Would you leave? Would you go to LA and try it out there?

Iza

If I have enough work. There are some actresses, like the lead actress I work with in this film (Amelia Warner), she lives in London and she flies back and forth to LA for auditions. *Siguro*, she'll stay there for a month, a month and a half and then she'll fly back to London. She still gets the best of both worlds. This is her first Hollywood film as a leading lady. The other projects that I know of, of hers, she was just supporting. She was in "Aeon Flux" and in "Winter Passing." I'm really hoping that she would become a big star and I would know someone who's a big star. I could say, "Hey! That's Millie!"

Interviewer

Do you keep in touch?

Iza

We were talking and she said "I'm bad at keeping in touch." But we have each other's numbers. *Yung iba-ka-facebook ko*, the two producers but not always. Feeling ko, that's what happens. That's the sad truth also: life goes on and you get caught up with all the things you need to do. But once in a while you remember and it's Christmas, I'll text the people. Some I have the numbers, for the others, I'll send e-mail. For sure because it was such a pleasure working with such nice people especially because I was in a foreign country. I hardly knew anyone and they treated me so kindly.

SEQ. 04 DAY/INT Raymund Isaac's Studio

In the four different outfits, Iza Calzado has made a stunning transformation. She plays with the camera going from victim to assailant in a matter of seconds. Raymund fires away capturing every moment.

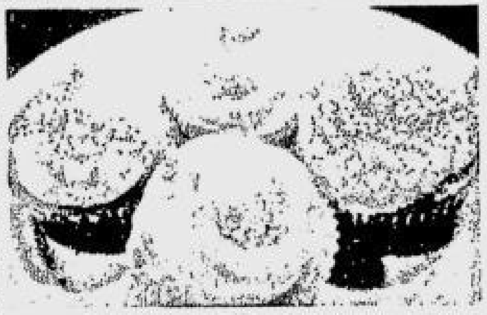
For now, Iza is back home, getting back into the routine of things but in a few months, promotions for "The Echo" will bring her back to Hollywood and who knows if they'll keep her there for a much longer while.

FEMME fatale

Iza

People would ask me what it was like working with an international star and working on a Hollywood film and I would tell them it's just like working in any other film set. It's just that I don't know them and it was outside my comfort zones. *Buti na lang* that Yam was there. Would they have treated me differently if Yam wasn't there? But I would like to think *na hindi*, just so that *maganda ang alaala ko* that everyone is nice in the world.

Don't burst my bubble.



BUTTERCUP'S colorful, scrumptious cupcakes in vanilla, chocolate, and to-die-for Red Velvet will make you so giddy with joy, you can't help but sing that song ...

Buttercup, Baby

Buttercup Bake Shop
973 Second Ave. between 51st & 52nd Streets,
New York, NY 10022 and 141 W. 72nd St. between Amsterdam and Columbus Avenues, New York, NY 10023

There's no sweet treat that's more "New York" than the cupcake. The debate is still ongoing, however, on where the best cupcakes can be found. I have a personal preference for Buttercup Bake Shop. The storefront is fuss-free, but when you read, "Life is short. Have dessert first" on the window, you know you've found your match. My absolute favorite is the Red Velvet. The perfectly moist, not-too-saccharine red velvet cake is complemented nicely by the slightly tart whipped cream cheese topping. At $1.85 apiece, indulge in other sweet somethings, like the Buttercup Golden cupcakes topped in a rainbow of colors, or the intriguing German Chocolate cupcakes spiked with toasted coconut.

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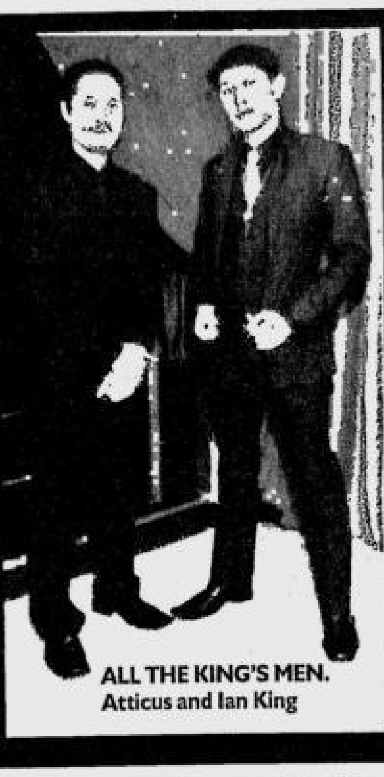
PEEPS
Glambassadors

STUDY IN RED. Teresa Herrera


ALL THE KING'S MEN. Atticus and Ian King

FOODIE CALL. Fernando Aracama and Chicho Suarez.

DOUBLE A-LIST. Rafa and Amina Alunan

THREE-HUGGING. Raj and Apples Sadhwani and Ruffa Gutierrez

WHITE KNIGHT-LEE. Adriano Kartuliares and Divine Lee

Ulterior Motive: The new Embassy Superclub sneak peek

Crime Scene: Embassy Superclub, Bonifacio Global City

Date of Release: November 20

PHOTOS BY EDDIE BOY ESCUDERO AND TALS DIAZ

FACE YOUR FIERCE. Ginò dela Paz and Jenni Eperson

CELEBRITY DUET. KC Concepcion and Tim Yap

URBAN MYTHOLOGY. Paolo Araneta and Celine Gabriel

METRO-SEXUALS. Wanggo Gallaga and Cat Juan

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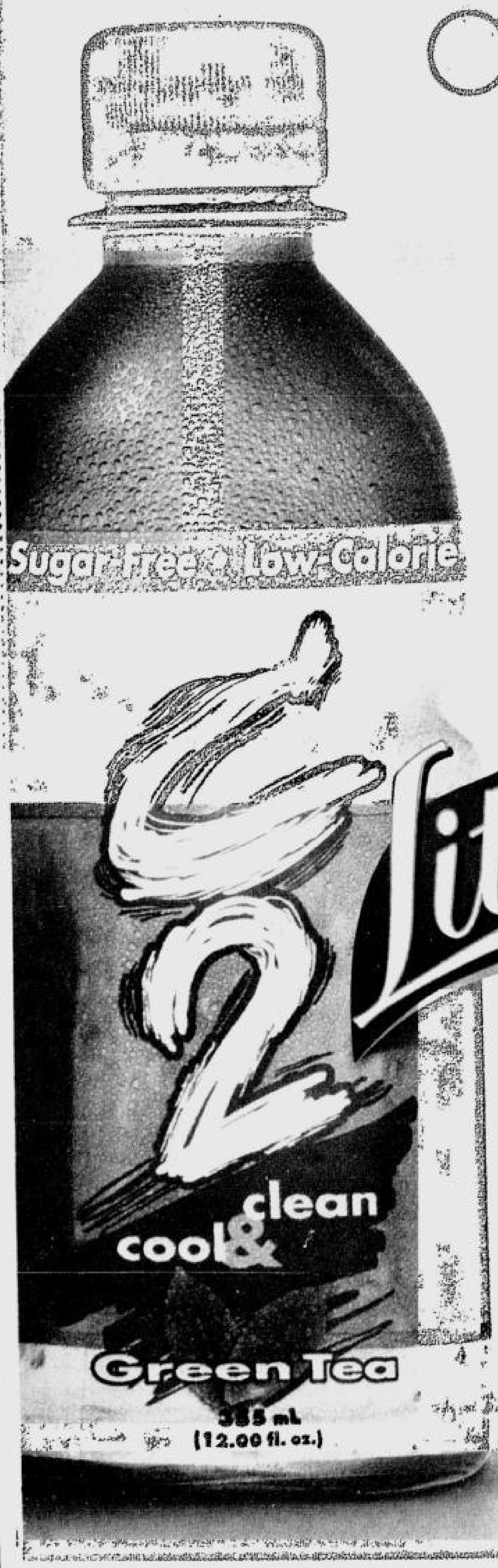


Sugar Free • Low-Calorie
C2 Lite
cool & clean

Carved in rock

Lessons learned from the school of rock history

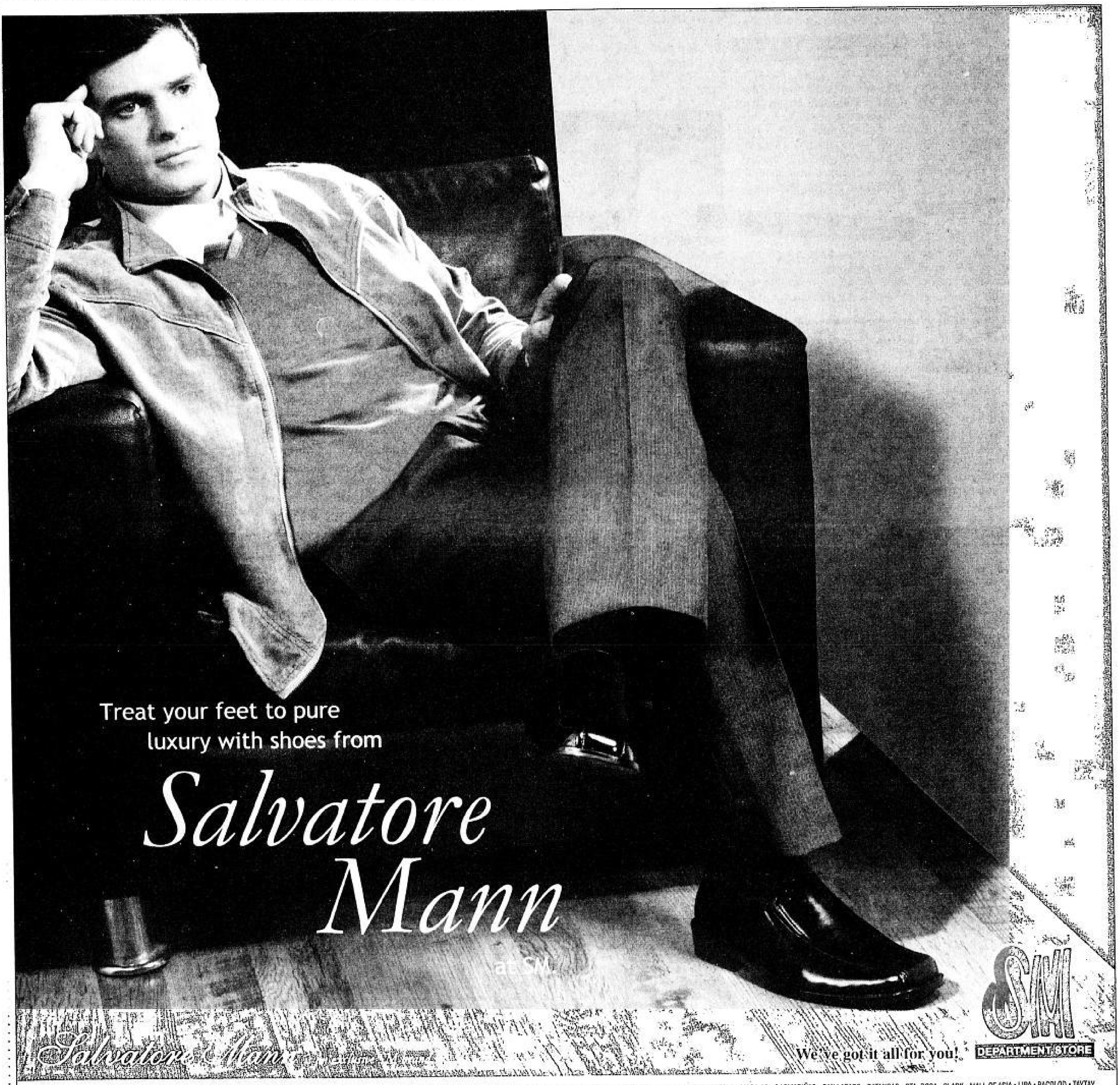
OUT THE WINDOW

Tals Diaz

MEMORY HAS NO INK to [illegible] out. The most outstanding moments live in[illegible] fully in the collective memories of those who experienced it.

And that is why the story of [illegible] the biggest night on the rock music [illegible] have kept it alive and [illegible] [illegible]

BOSS OF THE BASS. Louie Talan, NU Rock Awards 2000



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Carved in rock

From page D1

#1: If you've fought the law in the name of punk rock, then you might actually win.

"I was trying to find parking two minutes before I had to play a punk rock medley of NU107 hits. Haha!! Fought a lot of guards to leave my car in the middle of the street."—*LOUIE TALAN, Razorback*

#2: Never insult the fans. Like, ever.

"It would have to be when a certain movie star was booed offstage after calling the crowd *'jologs'*, then tried to calm them down by saying *'Jologs din ako.'*"—*JOEY DIZON, Pulp Magazine*

#3: True rock stars sing the National Anthem from the heart—and more importantly, know the words by heart.

"Cooky Chua singing the National Anthem at Limits at the Rock Awards '98. Her voice was so exceptionally captivating, it made my hair stand on end. I don't recall anyone hearing anyone sing 'Lupang Hinirang' as beautifully as she did prior to that."—*ISABELLE RAMOS, NU107*

"Oh that? When I sang the National Anthem for them back in 2003."—*PEPE SMITH, Juan de la Cruz*

#4: Rockers spawn urban legends.

"Most memorable—when Pepe snaked up the stage in Music Museum. That was also the same night that the rumor that Cowboy was Clapton's son was spreading like fire in the audience. Ha ha ha! Quite a while back."—*KATRINA TUASON-CRUZ, Rogue Magazine*

#5: If you want to win, take down notes from "The Secret."

"Last year we had nine nominations, so we were all excited and nervous and we agreed amongst ourselves that the Best New Artist award was the only award we wanted to take home since you can only win it once. So we were late for a couple of minutes and then when we got to the venue the first thing we did was gather around the monitor at the backstage and then they started playing our song. We stood in shock and screamed for a couple of seconds before we actually went up onstage. We got exactly what we wished for alright."—*ARMI MILLARE, Up Dharma Down*

"The first is always the most unforgettable ... Rewind to NU Rock Awards 1994. We were such a small blip on the radar, Rivermaya and I had no seats and we sat scrunched up on the stairs of the aisle of Music Hall (Annapolis Street, now dearly departed.) The boys were awestruck and promised me that next year they would be performing onstage."—*LIZZA G. NAKPIL, manager, Rivermaya*

#6: Animal behavior is forgivable when it's for a good cause.

"When we played 'Baboy' at the onset of the clamor against Erap in 2000, not knowing his replacement would be the bigger swine. And in 2005, when I stood as presenter with a sexy starlet beside me, and not realizing my zipper was open."—*LOURD DE VEYRA, Radioactive Sago Project*

#7: There is no such thing as indecent exposure.

"Dong Abay rocking a *bahag*. I was on drums so I had a full view of his a—"—*RAIMUND MARASIGAN, Sandwich/Pedicab*

#8: Come hell or high water (or possible heart attack) the show must go on.

"NU 107 Rock Awards 2004, jampacked in spite of supertyphoon."—*DJ PONTRI, NU 107*

"Some time in the late '90s, when during a very exciting moment for the 'Heads, someone came up to me and started asking medical advice about a boil on his foot and even showed me. Haha! And about two (or three) years ago, when I received multiple calls and texts asking me to go backstage to help Mike Dizon of Sandwich who collapsed onstage. Quark had called an ambulance, it was a scared frenzy backstage 'coz everyone thought he had a heart attack and Mike still wanted to play ... I took care of things (The Barbs even helped out!) and he was able to go on!—*DAY CABUHAT, manager, Pupil*

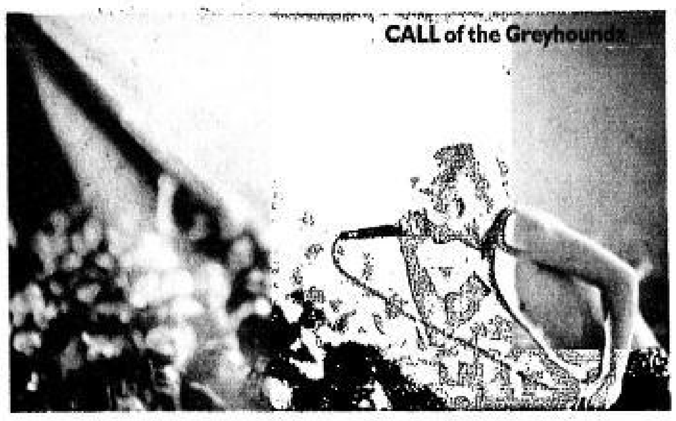
#9: Rock stars like living dangerously.

"There was a year when NU had these trophies with pointed edges and when Parokya went up to get their award, Buwie lifted the trophy, at the same time as Chito was bowing his head in thanks and the trophy cut across the brow."—*DINDIN MORENO, Parokya ni Edgar*

"No, no, Buwie didn't hold up the trophy, Chito just bowed his head into the trophy ..."—*RICHARD TAN, Parokya ni Edgar*

DIETHER Ocampo and NU DJ Jaedee

LOURD'S PRAYER. Lourd de Veyra (*Gusto din nya ng kanin.*)



CALL of the Greyhoundz

#10: Something other than video nearly killed the radio star.

"My favorite Rock Awards moment ... is the minute it's over! That means I don't have to think of the script, which is a concern that occupies me for many weeks beforehand and intensifies as the date draws near. The day itself is particularly stressful. And of course the script is never followed, sleepless nights spent making thoughts flow into funny lines all down the drain. Though I've come to expect that and not feel too precious about the work I put in. When I see the TV special and everything seems flawless though, that means we all did a pretty decent job. But in reality, it's a bitch to put together!"—*FRANCIS "BREW" REYES, The Dawn/music director, NU107*

#11: Great music is better than Viagra.

"Almost getting fired for saying 'I get a hard on when I hear a good tune' while presenting the award for Song of the Year with Anjanette Abayari and David Bunevacz back in '97. Atom turned to Myrene wide-eyed and asked 'Can he say that? Is it in the script?' After the show, I went up to Atom and said, 'Mr. Henares, I'm so sorry, It won't happen again'. Then Atom said to Quark Henares, 'Hey, Zach called me Mr. Henares *ha! OK ha*,' that's my most memorable."—*ZACH LUCERO, Imago*

PEPE'S posse

"A lot. When Monsterbot played and won Producer of the Year. When Cambio performed and was nominated Video of the Year. And lastly, when Pedicab won Best New Artist and I was in the hospital because my wife just gave birth to our baby, Vito. Then RA called me just getting offstage screaming that we won. So double whammy for me that day."—*DIEGO MAPA, Pedicab/Monsterbot/Cambio*

#12: Friends in the industry beef up your resumé.

"Well, when Greyhoundz performed for their first Rock Awards as guest. Though I wasn't working with them yet, I was happy because the new metal scene was recognized by a major media member, NU107. Most memorable Rock Awards moment personally was when I saw Karl Roy after 15 years apart. Funny too, because the next year after that Rock Awards (2004), he hired me to manage Kapatid."—*BUBI SANCHEZ, manager, Greyhoundz/Kapatid*

#13: Sometimes, well-deserved recognition happens only when you're gone.

"I've been religiously attending the Rock Awards since '98, but my most memorable is 2005, the only year I missed the event, which incidentally was the same year Mayrics got the Hall of Fame Award."—*ERIC SO, Mayrics*

#14: Songs named after celebutantes named after cities named after Greek goddesses win awards.

"I guess my memorable moment would be my first time to be at the Rock Awards with the Chicosci boys. That was back in 2002, the year 'Paris' became *the* rock anthem for the public. They bagged a bunch of awards and had one helluva kickass performance."—*RAYMOND FABUL, manager, Sponge Cola*

#15: Whatever you do—no matter how illegal, insane or inconsequential—it will always be cool if your name is Joey Pepe Smith.

"Pepe Smith at the very first NU Rock Awards ... he opened his jacket and pulled out a beer and drank it on stage ... that was a very big thing then to do it right on stage ..."—*DIEGO CASTILLO, Sandwich*

(NU 107 Rock Awards kicks off its 14th year on Nov. 30 at the World Trade Center. Rakenroll!)

And the nominees are ...

BEST NEW ARTIST:
1. Hilera
2. Sinosikat?
3. Giniling Festival
4. Hardboiledeggz
5. Salamin
6. Wake Up Your Seatmate

VOCALIST OF THE YEAR:
1. Bamboo Mañalac of Bamboo
2. Miggy Chavez of Chicosci
3. Steve Badiola of Typecast
4. Ebe Dancel of Sugarfree
5. Kat Agarrado of Sinosikat?
6. Marc Abaya of Kjwan

GUITARIST OF THE YEAR:
1. Mong Alcaraz of Chicosci
2. Ira Cruz of Bamboo
3. Mike Elgar of Rivermaya
4. Boogie Romero of Kjwan
5. Steve Badiola of Typecast
6. Junji Lerma of Radioactive Sago Project

BASSIST OF THE YEAR:
1. Nathan Azarcon of Bamboo
2. Carlos Calderon of Chicosci
3. Japs Sergio of Rivermaya
4. Francis de Veyra of Radioactive Sago Project
5. Ivan Garcia of Hilera

DRUMMER OF THE YEAR:
1. Vic Mercado of Bamboo
2. Melvin Macatiag of Typecast
3. Joel Salvador of Chicosci
4. Mark Escueta of Rivermaya
5. Chris Cantada of Spongcola

BEST LIVE ACT:
1. Bamboo
2. Chicosci
3. Typecast
4. Kjwan
5. Radioactive Sago Project
6. Jeepney Joyride
7. Hilera

IN THE RAW AWARD:
1. Subsscapular
2. Teenage Hero
3. Kastigo
4. Sutil
5. Reklamo

SONG OF THE YEAR:
1. "Will You Ever Learn" by Typecast
2. "Chicosci Vampire Social Club" by Chicosci
3. "Tatsulok" by Bamboo
4. "Sala" by Pupil
5. "Turning My Safety Off" by Sinosikat?
6. "Sundo" by Imago
7. "DVD X" by Sandwich

ARTIST OF THE YEAR:
1. Bamboo
2. Chicosci
3. Typecast
4. Kjwan
5. Sugarfree
6. Radioactive Sago Project

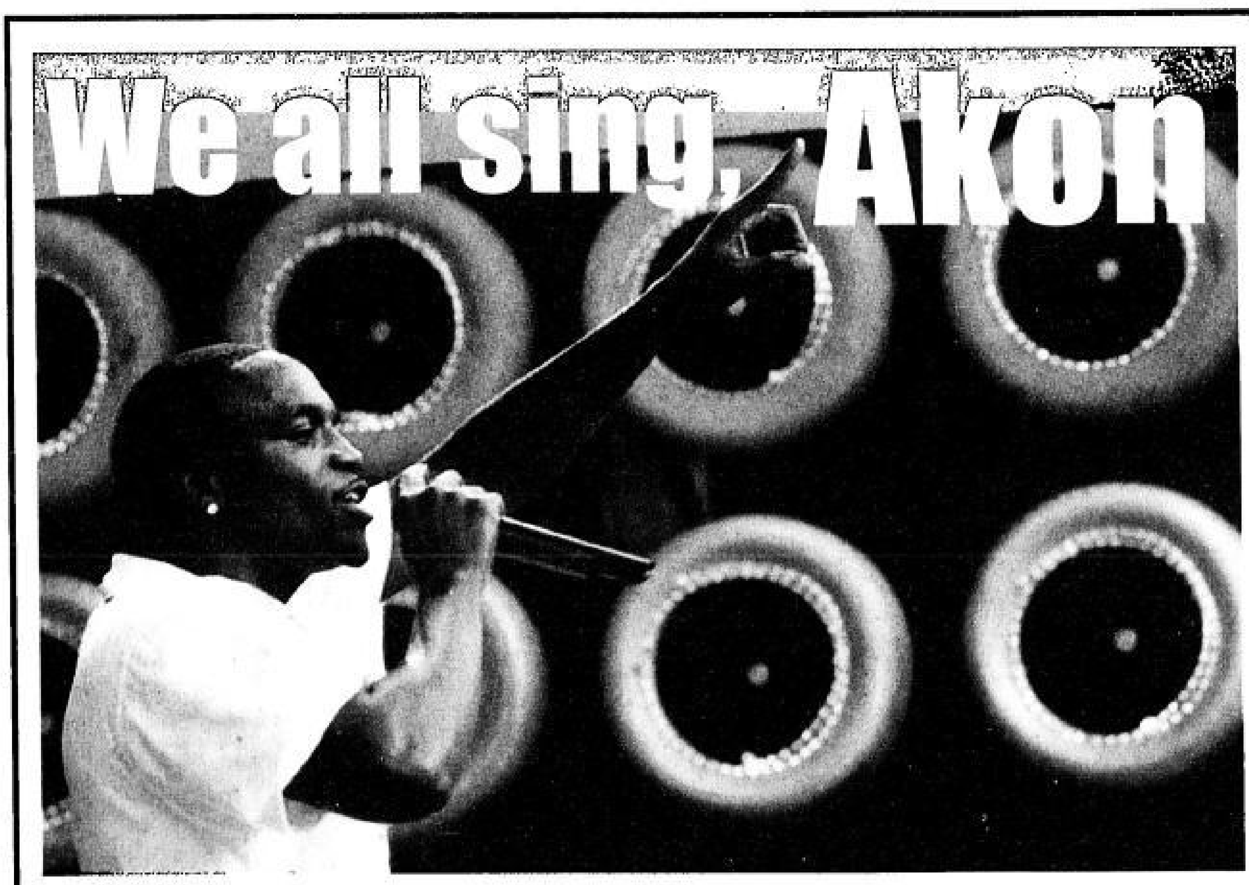
ALBUM OF THE YEAR:
1. "We Stand Alone Together" by Bamboo
2. "Every Moss And Cobweb" by Typecast
3. "Tangina Mo Ang Daming Nagugutom Sa Mundo Fashionista Ka Pa Rin" by Radioactive Sago Project
4. "Tala-arawan" by Sugarfree
5. "Moonlane Gardens" by Orange & Lemons
6. "2STEPMARV" by Kjwan

BEST ALBUM PACKAGING:
1. Inksurge.com for Twilight of Hale
2. Paolo Lim for Isang Ugat, Isang Dugo of Rivermaya
3. Sarah Gaugler and Clementine for Moonlane Gardens of Orange & Lemons
4. Inksurge.com for Tala-arawan of Sugarfree

PRODUCER OF THE YEAR:
1. Bamboo and Angee Rozul for We Stand Alone Together of Bamboo
2. Typecast for Every Moss And Cobweb by Typecast
3. Lourd and Francis De Veyra for Tangina Mo Ang Dami Nagugutom Sa Mundo Fashionista Ka Pa Rin by Radioactive Sago Project
4. Robert Javier and Jonathan Ong for Moonlane Gardens by Orange & Lemons
5. Robin Rivera for Tala-arawan by Sugarfree
6. Angee Rozul and Kjwan for 2step Marv of Kjwan

BEST MUSIC VIDEO:
1. "DVD X" of Sandwich (directed by Marie Jamora)
2. "Frailty" of Urbandub (directed by Pancho Esguerra and Bluerain Media)
3. "Kung Ayaw Mo Na Sa Akin" by Sugarfree (directed by Marie Jamora)
4. "Loveteam" of Itchyworms (directed by Marie Jamora)
5. "Probinsyana" of Bamboo (directed by Pancho Esguerra)
6. "Sundo" of Imago (directed by Marie Jamora)
7. "Will You Ever Learn" of Typecast (directed by Pedring Lopez)

We all sing, Akon



TIRED OF THE THINGS THAT DON'T Matter? Well, here's something that will certainly send a vibe down your spine and will cause you to move to the beat of a lively tune. Akon, one of the most talented hip-hop and R&B singers in today's generation, will be coming to Manila for a live performance that is sure to be the talk of everyone.

Plunging head first into the music scene, the most talked about singer, song writer and record producer started at the age of 15 in making records. Music truly surged through his veins, having jazz percussionist Mor Thiam as his father. Trouble, his debut album, is a testimony to this. Composed of singles like Locked Up, Lonely, Belly Dancer (Bananza), Pot of Gold and Ghetto, all with their unique beats and catchy lyrics, it was no wonder that these songs made him shoot to the top of the charts and garnered him platinum awards.

Having appeared in live performances all over the globe, it is not surprising that Akon is known by people everywhere and his songs, loved by almost everyone. His audiences relate to him because of the genuineness of his music. His second album, Konvicted, proved this as it earned him platinum sales awards, signifying the extent of his talent. Dominating the airwaves, his great hits just kept on climbing the charts, causing Akon aficionados to hunger for more.

Akon's songs are always a hit, not only because of the beat or the way that he delivers it but because of the realness that they have. "Can't wait to get out and move forward with my life" are lyrics from Locked Up, which he had written based on his experiences when he was jailed just before he released his debut album. He had also admitted that this particular experience in his life is what made him the man that he is now.

As lively and as hip as his music is, one of the songs that really climbed the top spot is his mellow Don't Matter single, where he wrote about his personal love story with a lady. "Nobody wanna see us together but it don't matter coz I've got you" shows us that Akon not only provides quality music, his songs also come from some place private and meaningful. Having the attitude of giving his fans a piece of himself through his lyrics signifies the kind of artist that he truly is underneath all the controversy.

Akon reaches out to his audience, may it be through his concerts, his interviews or through his songs. Having written the song, Sorry Blame It on Me after an incident in one of his concerts lets us see the part of Akon which cares for his listeners and the fans that admire him and his work.

Akon always delivers the best in everything he does, may it be songs, music or his concerts. Wherever he performs, loyal fans are sure to follow, bringing with them uncontained energy of only the hip-hop and R&B genre have. His live performances can be compared to enormous parties where everyone just grooves to the sound and voice of the world-renowned artist. He pleases the crowd, having them participate with the hits that he sings.

Witness the talent and hear the unique sounds of Akon as he performs his songs Live in Manila on Nov. 29, 2007 at the Araneta Coliseum. Be one of the people to experience his smooth lyrics and beats. Tickets are on sale at all SM Tickenet Outlets. For ticket inquiries and reservations, please call 911-5555 or 374-2222. Akon Live in Manila is presented to you by San Mig Light. Major sponsors are E-Aji Dip Snax, Mossimo, Discovery Suites, Converse, The Philippine Star and ABS-CBN. Special thanks to Asap '07, MCA Music, Myx, Lifestyle Network, Cinema One, Velvet, Maxxx, Balls, Hero, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Wave 89.1, Jam 88.3, Magic 89.9, RX 93.1, HIT 99.5, Love 90.7, Yes 101.1 and Max 103.5.

Super Selects

The A-list

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Heavenly bodies

Ultraslim Treatment at Philosophy by Mikaela Salon and Spa

The Yuletide season draws near and unless you're the Grinch, this means invitations to events, parties, reunions or just all out socializing has your PDA calendar on overload. Of course, when there's a party, you can be sure that there is food (and not the healthy kind) and booze. So, be ready for bloat or your killer clothes feeling exactly that, like they're killing you. What to do? Exercise takes time and dieting is close to impossible so there are a couple of quick fixes that are noninvasive and holistic, so you can make sure you're at your stellar best for a party weekend. The Philosophy by Mikaela Salon and Spa has an Ultraslim Treatment for those who want some Hollywood style pampering and trimming. Once you enter a spacious treatment room you get the benefits of a shower and steam bath, all over body scrub, deep massages, alternative cold and hot binding from two therapists. Just to inspire, you will get measured before and after the treatment and because the treatments are meant to detoxify, remove excess water, firm the skin and lessen the appearance of cellulite, there is always some loss and you're ready to go to walk down any red carpet that night or even the next. Take note that you will have to free up three hours in your day per session, but if you want a heavenly body without needles and any pain then the three hours are certainly worth it. Ten sessions once a week is normally recommended for a sustainable reduction in size but some get so addicted they go up to 20. To add to the celebrity-like treatment you can watch a DVD movie on a portable player while you're waiting for your cold and then warm bindings to be removed. Hot green tea and other beverages will also be served just to make your trip to the body beautiful even more enjoyable. The results for some, are worthy of an Oscar.

Philosophy by Mikaela Salon and Spa is located at the Penthouse level, 832 A. Arnaiz Avenue, Makati City. Tel nos. 892-1574, 818-5401 and 818-7469

Green-minded fashionistas

Jenni Epperson's eco-friendly shopping bags

Saving the environment sounds more unimaginable than it seems. You can take a step closer today or choose to stay where you stand, seeing it vaguely as ever. Making a change has never been made this easy. Introducing the most vibrant, modern, and stylish craze out right now: The Jenni Epperson line of Eco-friendly shopping bags. They shout "No to plastic" in the loudest way possible, reaching the unreachable, awakening the sleep of many shoppers who constantly use plastic. In colors such as fuschia, aqua, lime, and salmon, who can miss that valuable message it is sending out: "Say no to plastic." Its sizes are very friendly. The bags come with different designs that will truly unleash the "shoppingera" in everyone.

This is a shout out to all shopaholics out there who have unknowingly used up so many plastics, truly damaging the environment, and this is a shout out to the world. This time, make a difference; this time you can shop until you drop, without the guilty feeling of adding up to pollution. In fact, this is where you take that step closer to saving the environment. Every bag purchased will benefit Bantay Kalikasan and help the foundation in saving Mother Earth. What better way to help the environment and the future?

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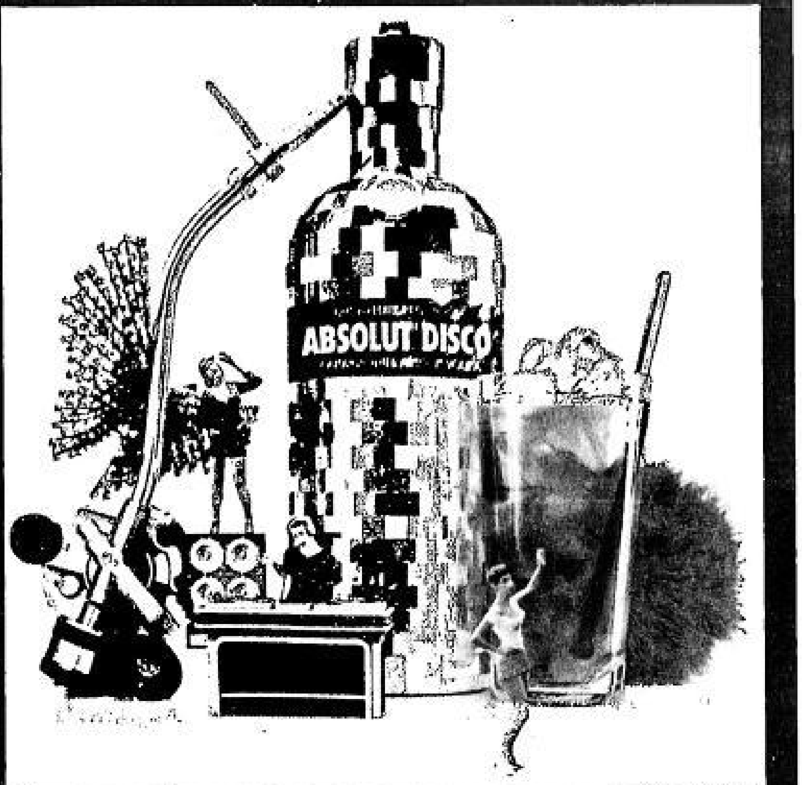
SHOPAHOLICS ANONYMOUS

BEING an earth girl is easy.



Dancing with the stars

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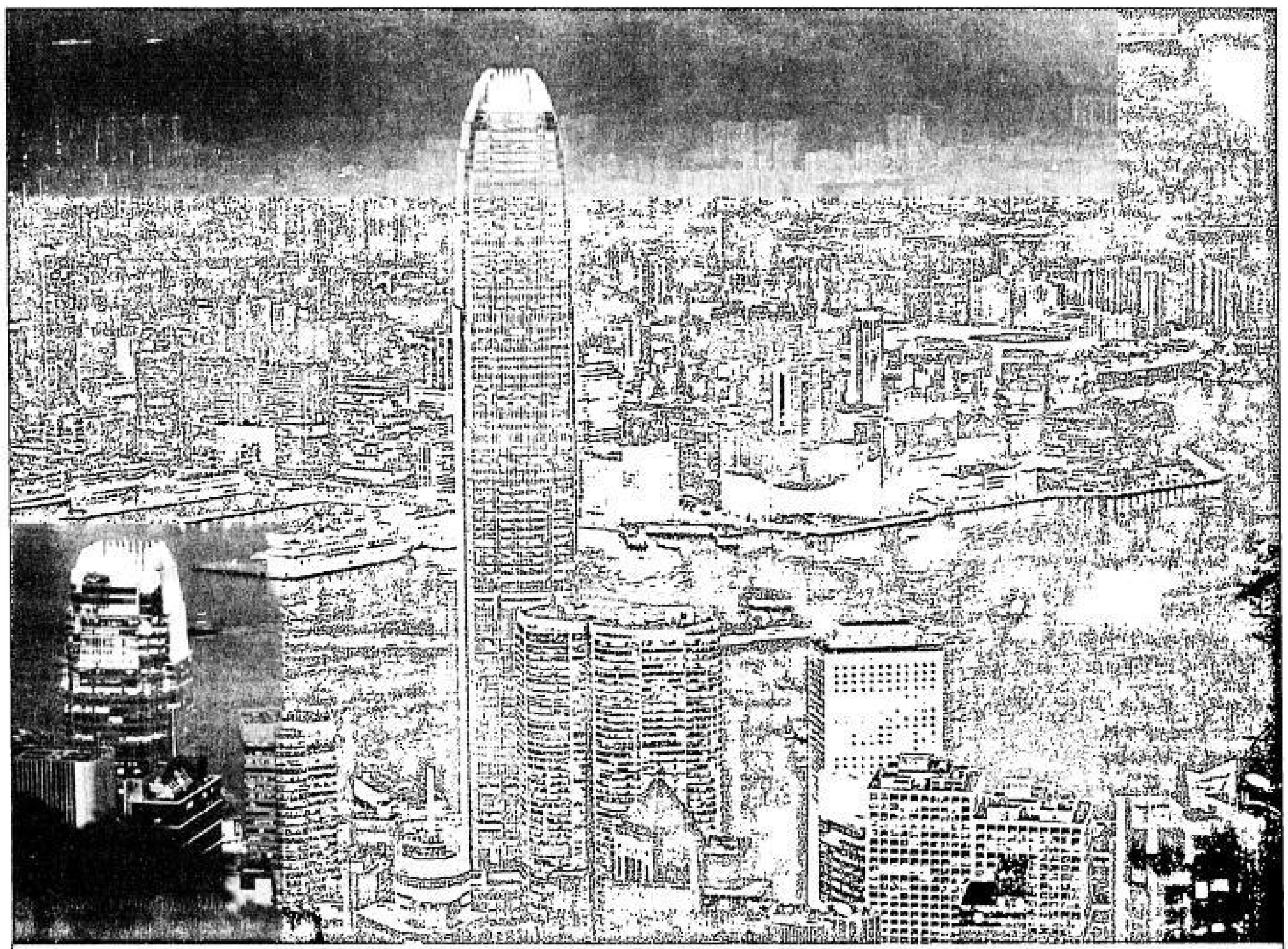

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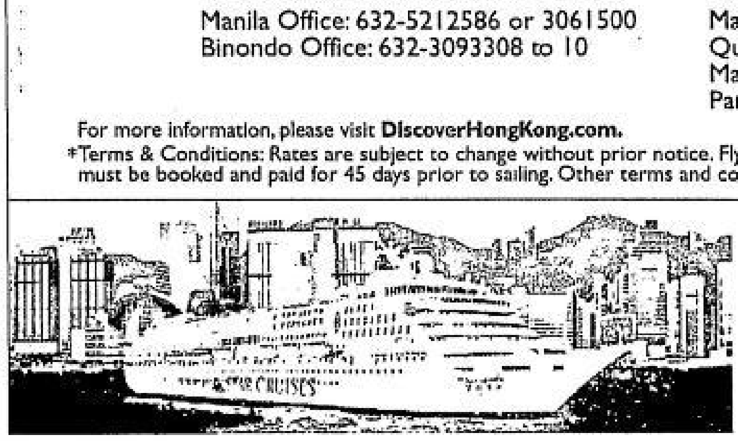

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Get into your celebrity skin.

Heavenly bodies

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Jenni Epperson's eco-friendly shopping bags

Saving the environment sounds more unimaginable than it seems. You can take a step closer today or choose to stay where you stand, seeing it vaguely as ever. Making a change has never been made this easy. Introducing the most vibrant, modern, and stylish craze out right now: The Jenni Epperson line of Eco-friendly shopping bags. They shout "No to plastic" in the loudest way possible, reaching the unreachable, awakening the sleep of many shoppers who constantly use plastic. In colors such as fuschia, aqua, lime, and salmon, who can miss that valuable message it is sending out: "Say no to plastic." Its sizes are very friendly. The bags come with different designs that will truly unleash the "shoppingera" in everyone.

This is a shout out to all shopaholics out there who have unknowingly used up so many plastics, truly damaging the environment, and this is a shout out to the world. This time, make a difference; this time you can shop until you drop, without the guilty feeling of adding up to pollution. In fact, this is where you take that step closer to saving the environment. Every bag purchased will benefit Bantay Kalikasan and help the foundation in saving Mother Earth. What better way to help the environment and the future?

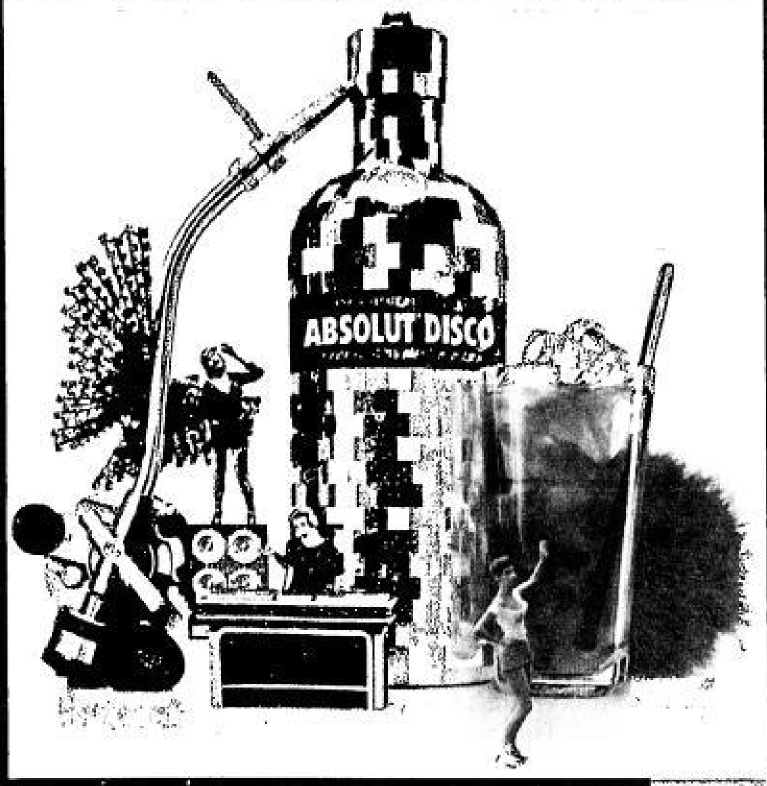
Jenni Epperson eco-friendly bags are available at The Ramp, 2nd floor Podium, Artists Fair Pilipinas bazaar in Eastwood (No.24-25) and www.jenniepperson.com.

Dancing with the stars

Absolut Disco Giftpack

Start a party and get your groove on anywhere with Absolut Vodka Disco. Take this one liter vodka bottle encased in 1,000 reflecting prisms and you've got a mobile mirror ball plus alcohol! When opening the Absolut Disco gift pack, it slides apart, revealing the classic Absolut Vodka bottle. The empty gift pack can easily be used as a mirror ball by hanging it in its loop — get the party started by hanging it up and becoming the center of dance-attraction. Disco music and attributes have been the ultimate indicators of dancing and having fun since the disco movement's birth in the New York club underground in the 1970s. When Absolut was introduced to the world in the late 1970s, it was a time when disco was peaking. The collaboration between Absolut Vodka and Andy Warhol coincided with the artists' frequent visits to the most legendary disco club of all—Studio 54. But hey, disco doesn't have to be indoors, take some friends out and dance outdoors with the best music you can find, with your "disco ball" to light the way.

To get into the groove with the Absolut Disco Gift Pack just purchase a 24 ml bottle of Absolut Vodka at your favorite supermarket or liquor store.



Bottle of the stars so you won't be a Hollywood square

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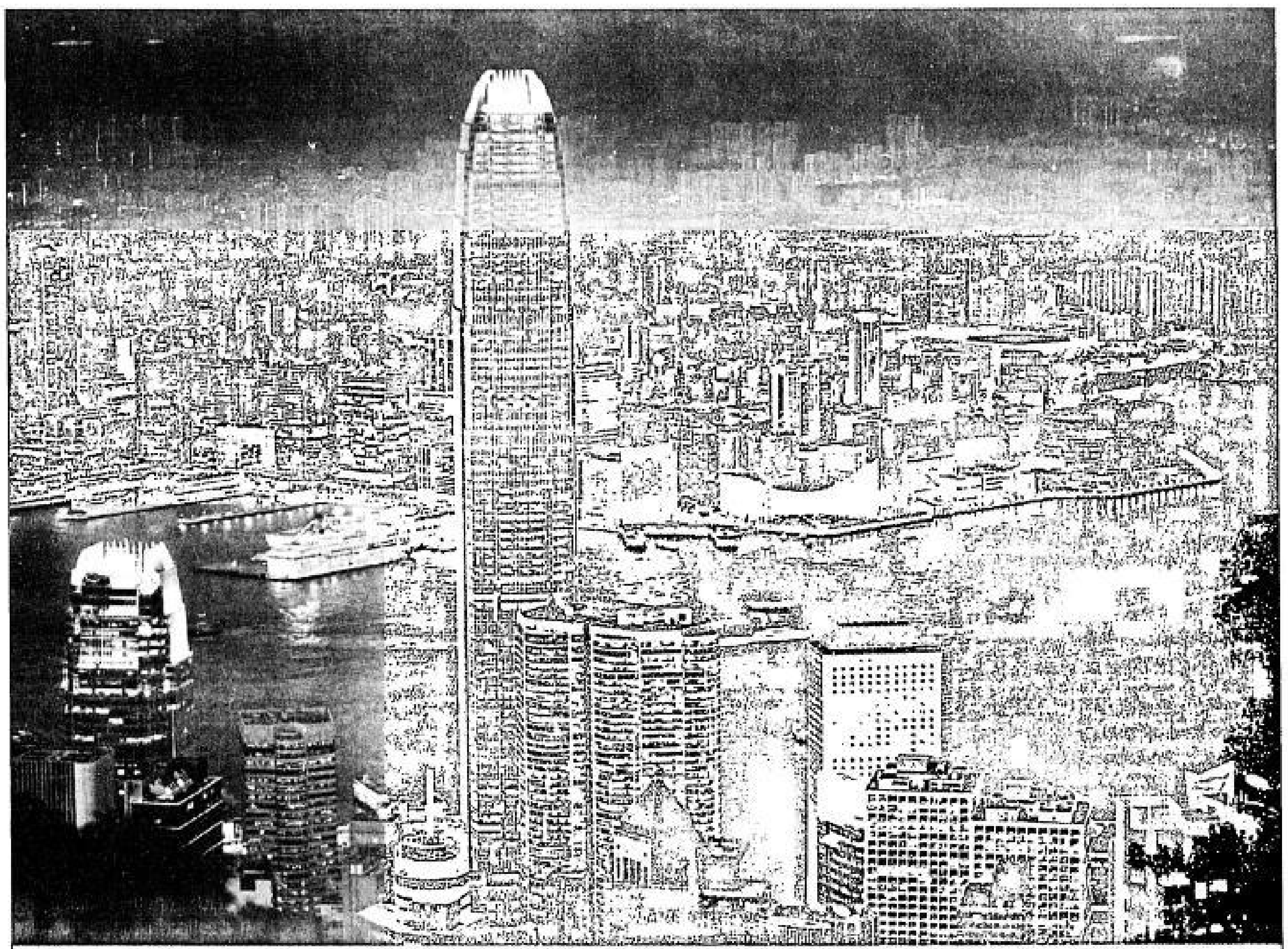

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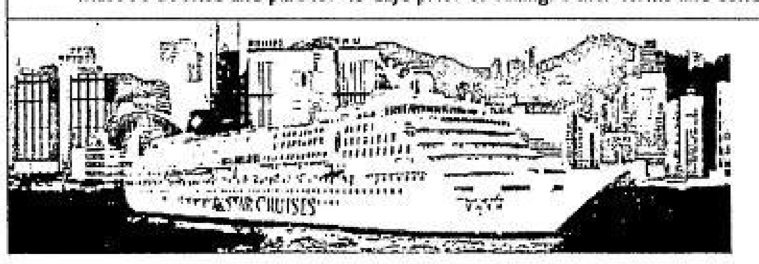
For more information, please visit **DiscoverHongKong.com.**
*Terms & Conditions: Rates are subject to change without prior notice. Fly/cruise booking valid till 31 December 2007. Complete package must be booked and paid for 45 days prior to sailing. Other terms and conditions apply.



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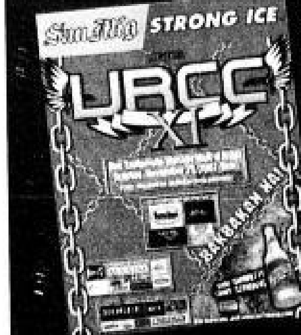
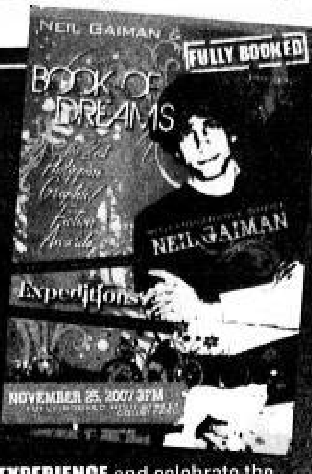


Get a **TASTE** of what it was like back in the days when the gladiators slugged it out for glory and their lives at **URCC XI "Redemption"** at One Esplanade (near SM Mall of Asia, Pasay City) on Sunday, Nov. 25, at 7 p.m. Let's cheer our own Caloy Baduria as he battles it out in the ring with Guam's Frank "The Crank" Camacho. Witness the return of Fritz Rodriguez and Phil "The Beast" Brynner. If you want to be in a hall full of men on adrenaline, this is the place to be. Check out www.urccmma.com for details.

SAVOR a big, juicy steak. Why do we seem to have a voracious appetite when the weather is cold and wet? Four places come to mind for the best steaks. Manila's best kept secret with no signboard and a two-story climb is **Elbert's Steak Room** [3/F Sagittarius Building III, 111 H.V. de la Costa St., Salcedo Village, Makati, T: 339-3363 and 315-1813, e-mail info@steakroom.com, www.steakroom.com]. Since it's a very exclusive place that operates from 7 p.m. and can seat only a dozen or so, reservations are recommended. Lately, our gastronome friends Katrina Holigores and Bingbing Ongsiako have been whetting our appetites with their blogs on steak eateries. There is the inexpensive Wagyu teppanyaki steak at Nihonbashitei Steak [806 Arnaiz Ave. (formerly Pasay Road), Makati, T: 818-8907 or (0926) 647-5803], and other great offerings at Myron's [Food Court, Power Plant Mall, Rockwell, T: 728-5555] and Mamou [G/F, Serendra, Bonifacio Global City, Taguig, T: 856-3589]. Excuse me, I've got to get back to finishing my steak… uhm, waiter!

With the stress of living in a big city, wellness is definitely a welcome lifestyle. **LOOK** great and feel great inside at the first ever **Bikram Yoga Posture Seminar**. Yoga's a great alternative and more holistic way of keeping healthy and fit—if an intense cardio workout and being constantly out of breath isn't your cup of tea. Ren Soriano, a senior teacher and faculty member of the Bikram College headquarters in Los Angeles, California will give a talk this Sunday, Nov. 25, at the Bikram Yoga Manila studio at 5/F CKB Center, 203 Tomas Morato, Quezon City from 11:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Call 376–4632 or log on to www.bikramyogamanila.com for more information.



EXPERIENCE and celebrate the wild and fantastic imagination of our very own local writers and comic book artists in their exploration of unreality at the **Book of Dreams: the 2nd Philippine Graphic/Fiction Awards** on Sunday, Nov. 25 at 3 p.m. at Fully Booked on Bonifacio High Street. The Dream King himself, Neil Gaiman, is flying in for the awards ceremony and the launch of Expeditions, the compilation of the winning stories of the first graphic/fiction awards. Since this event is open to the public and we know how intense Gaiman's fans are, we're coming early.

SEE and listen to **Sugarfree** do what they do best—make excellent music—in MTV Sessions at Tiendesitas Activity Center, Ortigas Center, Pasig City on Nov. 28, 9:30 p.m. We expect a big sing-along to their soaring anthem-like hits such as "Hari ng Sablay," "Makita Ka Muli" and great performance of tracks from their latest album Tala Arawan. This event comes right at the heels of Sugarfree's concert with the Manila Symphony Orchestra. It's free too, so bring your whole neighborhood over for a real block party!

Do you **HEAR** that steady bass beat set to music that you can't help but shake your booty to? That's what superstar hip-hop and R&B bad boy **Akon** is good at. His multitude of Filipino fans will be trooping to the Araneta Coliseum in Cubao, Quezon City on Thursday, Nov. 29, 8 p.m. to groove and dance the night away for hours, even after the concert. Don't forget to memorize lyrics to his hit songs "Don't Matter," "Smack That," "Sorry, Blame It On Me," and the ubiquitous "Bartender" (his monster hit with T-Pain) before going to the concert. We wonder if "Sweet Escape," his famous duet with Gwen Stefani, is part of the night's repertoire? Call 911-5555 for tickets.

Take a **GLIMPSE** at the workmanship and genius of local talents in fashion at the **YDG (Young Designers Group) Sale** at Corinthian Gardens Village Clubhouse from Nov. 30 to Dec. 2 from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. While you're there, support these talents by buying a piece or two from the designs of Brian Leyva, Ciara Marasigan, Ferdie Abuel, John Herrera, LZ Punzalan, Mitzi Quilendrino, Patty Eustaquio and Reian Mata.

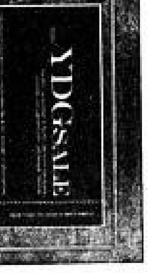


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Illustration courtesy of Working Mom Magazine

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Kodak	· Free 5 4R Kodak Digital Prints for every 25 4R Kodak Digital Prints ordered in any participating Kodak Express stores. · Free one Kodak Picture Kiosk print for every 10 4R Kodak Picture Kiosk prints in any participating Kodak Express stores. · PhP 50 OFF for every purchase of Kodak Ultra Compact Flash OR Water & Sports Single Use Camera in any participating Kodak Express stores. · 10% discount on cash purchase of Kodak Easyshare V series, Z series and M series (available in Silicon Valley/ Camerahaus)
The Mabuhay Manor Hotel	· 20% Discount on Hotel Accommodations on cash or credit card (based on published rates) · 20% Discount on Food and Beverage products at Sutukil and Lola's Restaurant. · 10% Discount on Banquet Packages · 20% Discount on use of Swimming Pool

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Goldilocks	· Free 1 pc. Sandwich Bread 400 g. for a minimum single receipt worth P350.00
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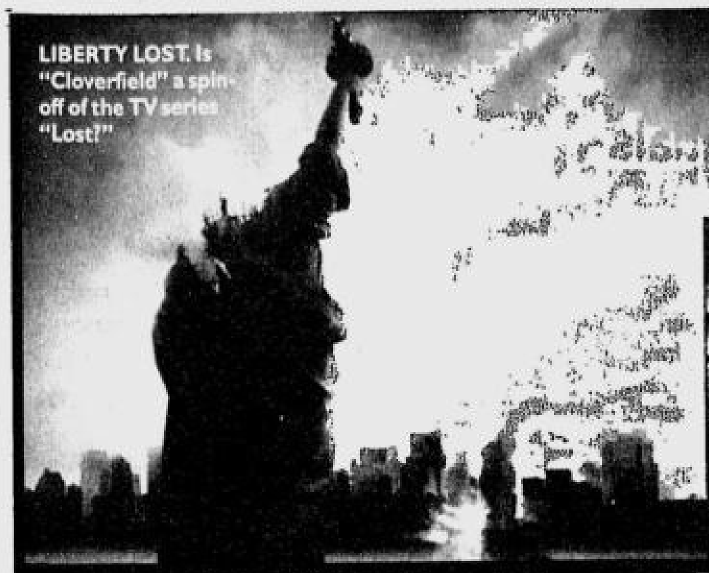
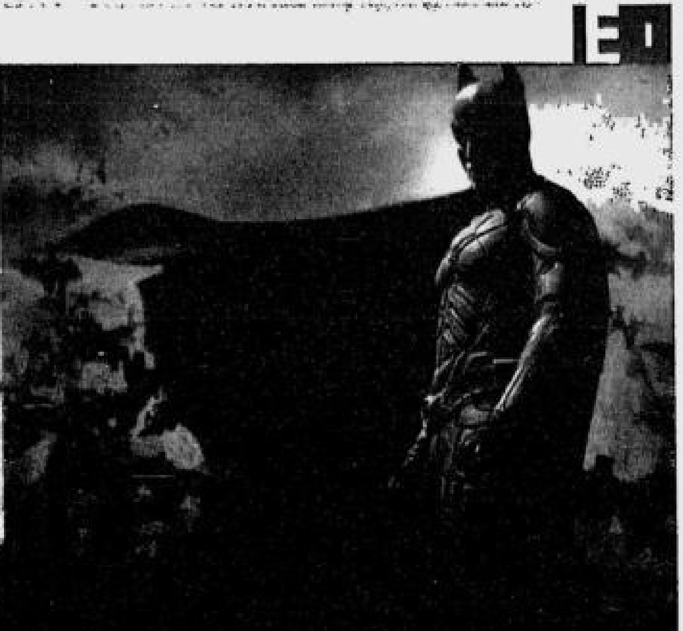


LIBERTY LOST. Is "Cloverfield" a spin-off of the TV series "Lost?"



THUNDER ROAD

James Gabrillo

At the movies

A round-up of the Hollywood films to look out for (and stay away from)

THE COMING months are gonna be crazy for Hollywood.

Hitting the screens are hordes of new installments of blockbuster hits. There are a lot to watch out for—Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull (starring Harrison Ford, Shia LaBeouf, and Cate Blanchett), The Chronicles of Narnia: Prince Caspian, Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince, Mummy: Tomb of the Dragon Emperor (Jet Li, Michelle Yeoh, and Maria Bello join Brendan Fraser), The Incredible Hulk, Goal 3, and Bond 22.

Heck, even the dinosaurs of Jurassic Park are making a comeback via their fourth film. Oh, and Sylvester Stallone returns for another Rambo movie. All is well. I think.

Unfortunately for us, there's a gang of unwelcome follow-ups headed by Hellboy 2: The Golden Army, Saw V, Scooby Doo 3, Final Destination 4, The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants 2, Scary Movie 5, Ace Ventura Jr., and Anaconda 3: The Offspring. I'm not kidding about that last one.

The alarmingly perky kids of High School Musical are also back for yet another installment, leading a mob of hyper titles like Superhero! (Drake Bell, Leslie Nielsen), Foodfight! (Charlie Sheen, Hilary Duff, Eva Longoria, Haylie Duff), Mama, I Want to Sing! (Ciara, Lynn Whitfield, Patti LaBelle), Mamma Mia! (Meryl Streep, Pierce Brosnan), and Horton Hears a Who! The last one is a CGI animated film based on Dr. Seuss' 1954 book. Jim Carrey and Steve Carell lend their voices for the lead parts.

There's also Repo! The Genetic Opera, a rock musical film starring Paris Hilton. FANTASTIC. I know that you'll understand when I order you to stay away from this film.

AT THE MOVIES/ E3

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 5896 Series of 2007

PLAY ON!

Fun and Toys are childhood essentials

Princess Rosella from BARBIE as The Island Princess

BARBIE Fashion Fever Doll

Nowadays, toy companies are producing toys at high rates that parents have a difficult time keeping up with the ever-evolving toy trends. And parents have a duty to their kids to make sound investments when it comes to purchasing toys whether it be during a toy craze or anytime throughout the year. This holiday season, Richwell, the largest toy distributor in the country, shares some useful tips in selecting the right toys for parents' early Christmas shopping lists.

In selecting the right toys for your kids, Richwell emphasizes the need to consider factors such as durability, size, weight, cost, extended play value, age appropriateness and safety when choosing a toy. It would be better to bring your children while shopping so you will know if he likes the toys you choose. Look for toys that tap your kid's natural interests. Girls like playing with pretend toys like Barbie and My Scene dolls which enhances their imagination, teach them proper grooming and polish their regard for fashion and beauty as they play dress up. Boys on the other hand, love action figures like Mega Bloks Dragons and sports toys like Hot Wheels and Matchbox that arouses their interest in mechanical concepts, while giving them the opportunity to apply their social skills in multi-player games. Check for the age grading on toys that indicates which toy is appropriate for your child's age. Look for toys that grow with your child, covering more than one developmental stage. Choose the ones that can be customized to your child's learning ability or cognitive stage like the VTech laptops and VSmile Learning System that can adjust subjects and skill levels that fit your child's needs. Select toys that give you the opportunity to participate in the play like UNO Game Collection, Scrabble and Pictionary that promote interaction and boost the child's learning while slowly but surely mounting their commonsensical training. Parents have the best ideas of things that their kids love so parents must be cognizant of safety at play. Avoid buying toys with small parts for children less than 3 years old that can pose as choking hazards. For smaller children, avoid toys with sharp edges and points. Make sure that the toys you buy are made of sturdy plastic that does not easily break into tiny pieces or create sharp, jagged edges. When the toy is damaged, dispose or repair it immediately.

Investing in your child's welfare is an important decision parents have to make. Toy selection comes with the territory and must be carefully considered. The joy and happiness expressed on a child's face as he/she grows into adult is the main goal of parenthood. Toys may offer a moment of entertainment and educational stimulation, but by far the greatest joy that a child receives is in his/her social interaction with parents.

Trust only toy brands that have been known for their quality, which can assure your child's safety. Check out the latest collection of the finest toy brands like the Barbie as the Island Princess, My Scene, Hot Wheels, Matchbox, Magnawheels, Pixel Chix, Polly Pocket, Winx, RoseArt, Magnetix, Chicco, Shelcore and many more at SM and other leading department stores and toy stores nationwide. For a sneak peek of what's to come, visit them at www.richwell.net or call Richwell Trading Corporation at telephone nos. 732-5141 to 47

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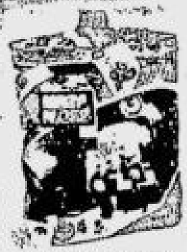
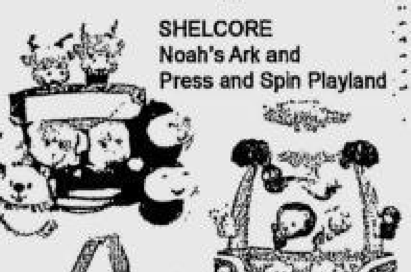


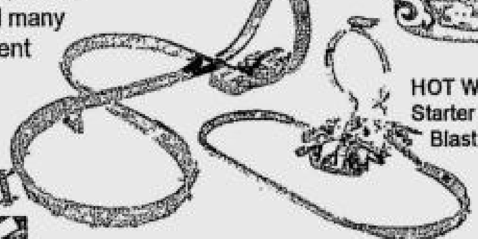
MEGA BLOKS Maxi bags

MY SCENE Juicy Bling

CHICCO Adventure backpack and Fun and Music bag



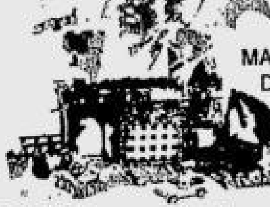
SHELCORE Noah's Ark and Press and Spin Playland



HOT WHEELS Starter Set and Blast & Crash Set

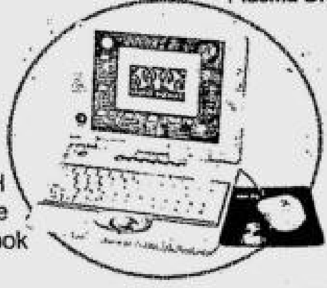
VTECH Vsmile Pocket

MEGA BLOKS Plasma Dragons

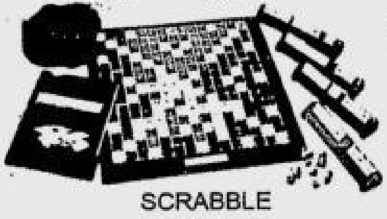


MATCHBOX Dragon's Castle Playset

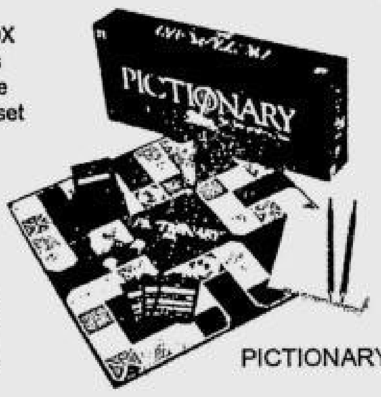
HOT WHEELS Basic Car



VTECH Slimline Notebook



SCRABBLE



PICTIONARY

UNO Spin

UNO Classic

UNO Stacko

"Gee, wish they had these in my size."
ollie

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At the movies

From page E1

It's a shame that Hollywood films can never get over their fear of originality. There's so much reliance on big car explosions, sex, and slapstick humor in order to sweep gazillions of money.

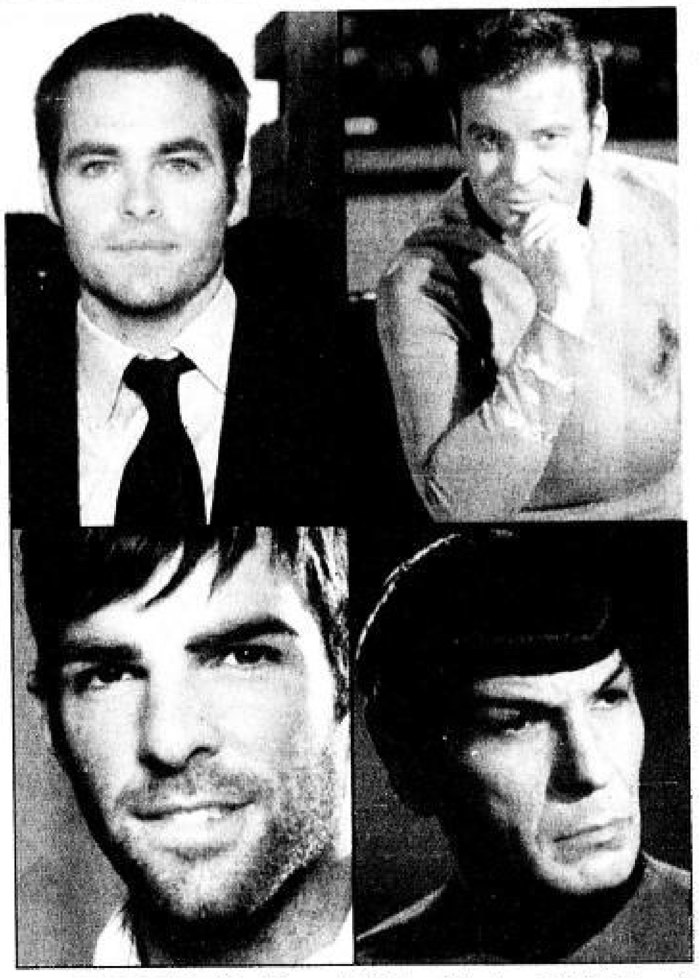
Has Hollywood truly forgotten how to tell a story? Here's a shortlist of potential blockbusters coming soon in your favorite movie houses. You decide.

Shine a Light

Directed by Martin Scorsese, this documentary film spans the career of superband (not to be confused with *superbad*, which it also is) The Rolling Stones. "Shine a Light" takes us backstage to get a first-hand look at all the rock and roll drama that occurred during the band's shows. The film includes historical clips, footage of past shows, and the band members' latest interviews.

The Dark Knight

DC Comics' Batman is back with this sequel to 2005's "Batman Begins." Ace director Christopher Nolan returns as well. Faced with roadblocks, the character Batman tries his best to continue his vigilante crusade. This new film based the character of criminal mastermind Joker on the villain's original look and attitude in the earliest comic books. The film also introduces a redesigned Batsuit, and the recreation of the Batcycle which will now be called Batpod. "The Dark Knight" stars Christian Bale (as Batman), Heath Ledger (as Joker), Michael Caine, Gary Oldman, Morgan Freeman, Aaron Eckhart, and Maggie Gyllenhaal.



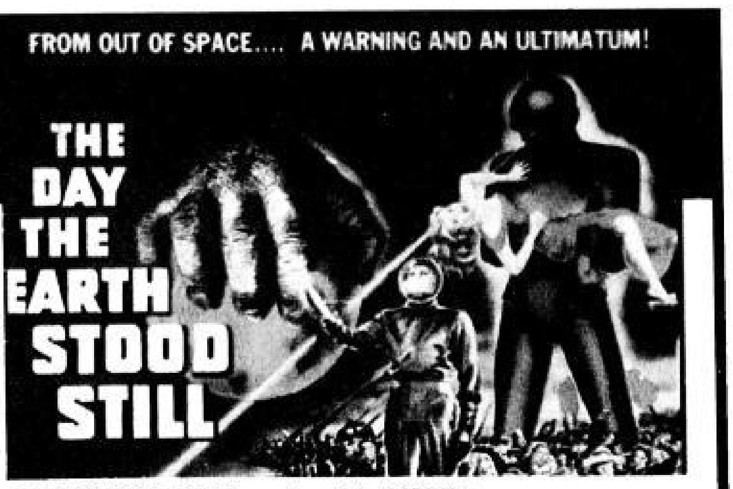
BEAM ME UP. Chris Pine is James T. Kirk and Zachary Quinto is Spock in the latest "Star Trek"

Blindness

Based on José Saramago's 1995 novel, the film tells the story of an epidemic that blinds the modern city and pushes society to the brink of breakdown. Directed by Fernando Meirelles, "Blindness" is top billed by Mark Ruffalo, Julianne Moore, Gael Garcia Bernal, and Danny Glover. The film was shot in Montevideo, São Paulo, and Toronto.

Cloverfield

"Cloverfield" tells the story of a group of people who's trying to survive a monster attack in New York City. The film is produced by J.J. Abrams, the creator of the ultra-popular TV series "Lost." In a press interview, Abrams explained how the character of this new monster was born in a toy store in—of all places—Japan: "We saw all these Godzilla toys, and I thought, we need our own monster, and not King Kong. I wanted something that was just insane and intense." Film buffs are speculating that Cloverfield is either a spin-off of Lost, or a live-action adaptation of "Voltron."


FROM OUT OF SPACE.... A WARNING AND AN ULTIMATUM!
THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL

KEANU'S FUTURE. The poster of the 1951 film

The Day the Earth Stood Still

A remake of the 1951 black-and-white science fiction film, "The Day the Earth Stood Still" is about a humanoid alien who warns our planet's leaders on the consequences of their endless arguments. Reflecting on politics and cultural fears on global annihilation, the film stars Keanu Reeves, Jennifer Connelly, and Kathy Bates.

SCORSESE SHOOTS THE STONES. The Rolling Stones in their revealing, stirring docu

The Curious Case of Benjamin Button

"The Curious Case of Benjamin Button" is adapted from the 1922 short story by F. Scott Fitzgerald. A 50-year-old man, played by Brad Pitt, starts to age backwards and further complicates his life when he falls for a lady (played by Cate Blanchett) who's 20 years his junior. David Fincher directs.

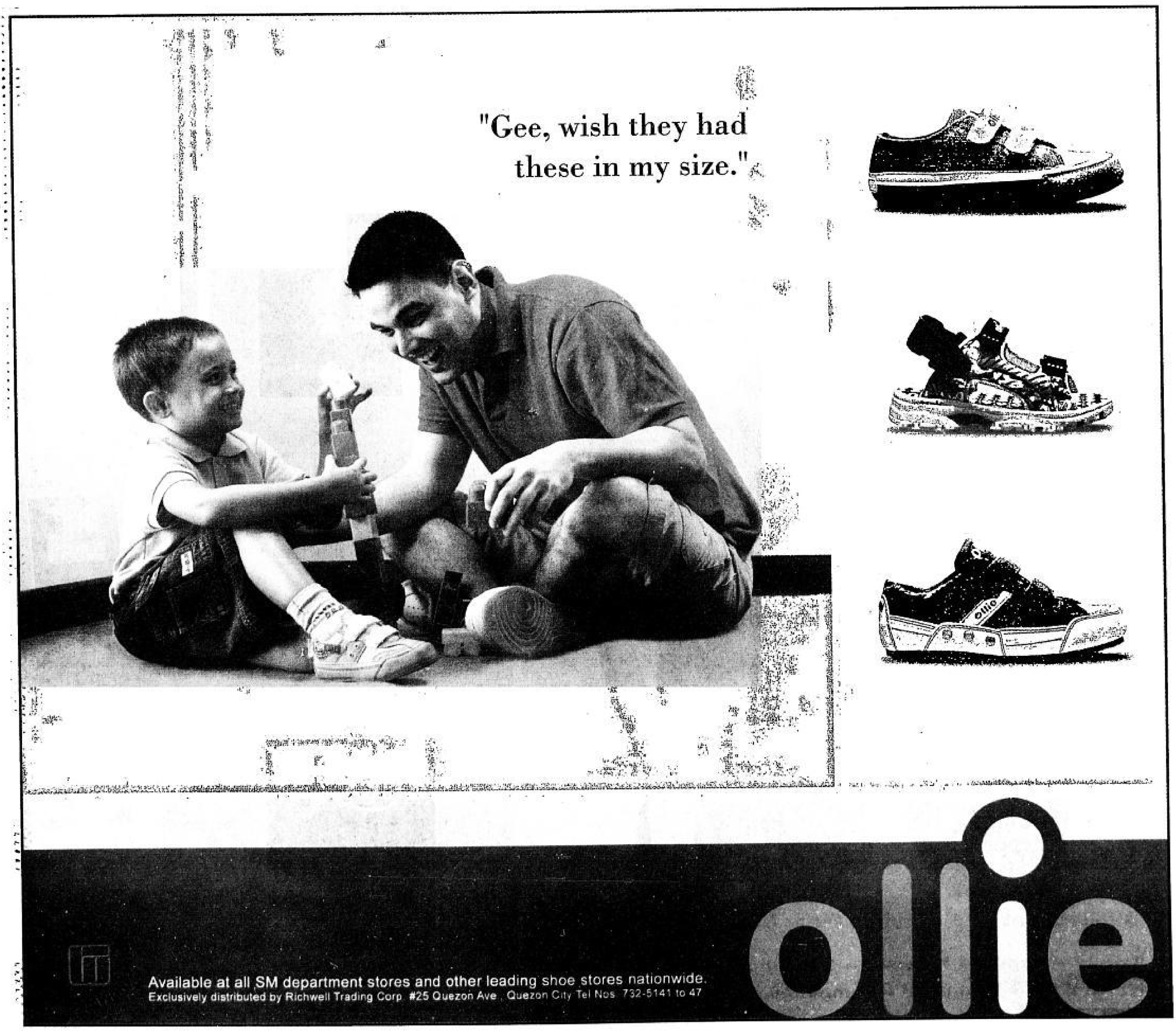
CASE CLOSED. Brad Pitt is Benjamin Button

Revolutionary Road

Here's another adaptation—this time of the 1961 novel by Richard Yates. Directed by Sam Mendes, "Revolutionary Road" features Titanic's big three—Leonardo DiCaprio, Kate Winslet, and Kathy Bates. The film, set in 1950's Connecticut, is about the collapse of a couple's relationship after they move to a new town.

Star Trek

The eleventh installment in the science fiction series is currently in production. Based on the franchise created by Gene Roddenberry, "Star Trek" will be produced by Lost co-creators J. J. Abrams (who's also the director) and Damon Lindelof. The film's plot will focus on the first adventures of James T. Kirk (played by Chris Pine) and Spock (Zachary Quinto). This is gonna be good.



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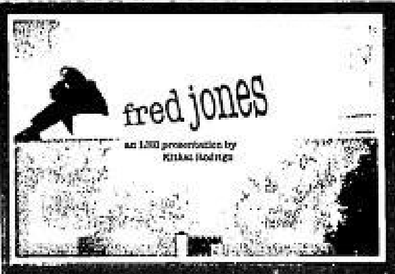

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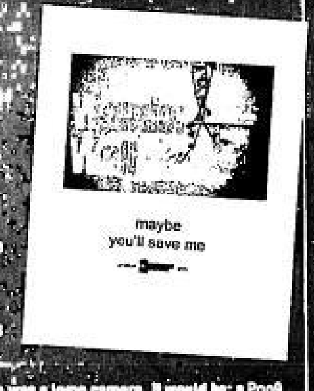

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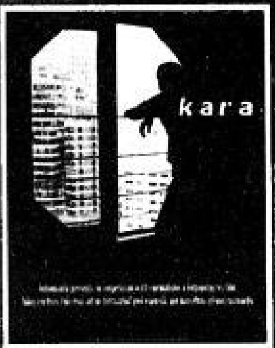

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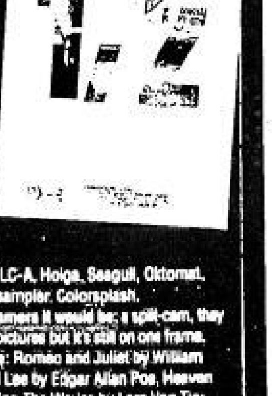

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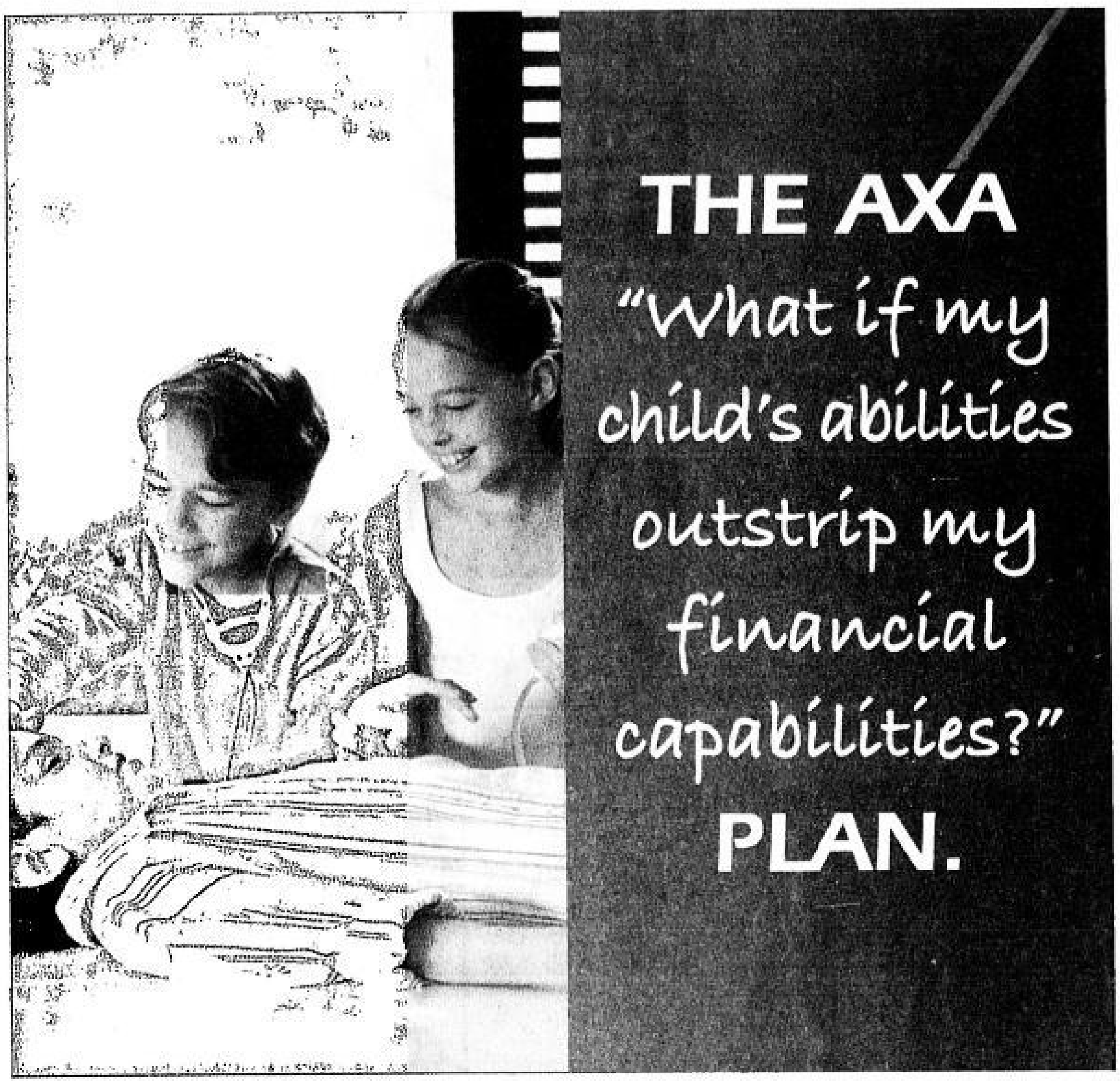
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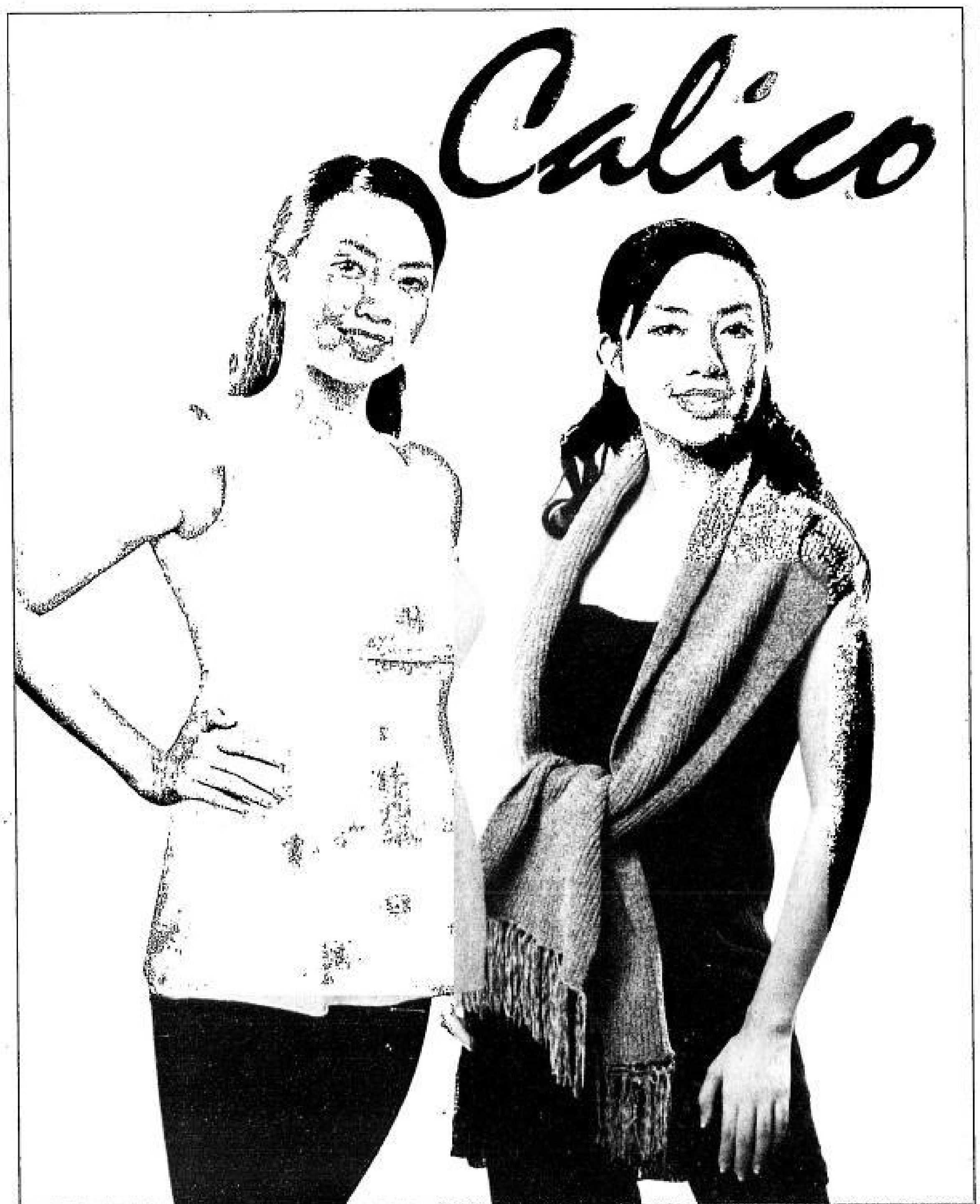

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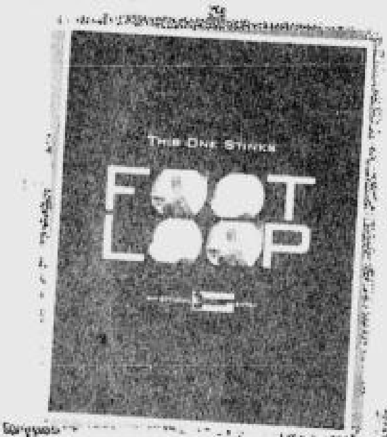
THIS ONE STINKS
FOOT LOOP

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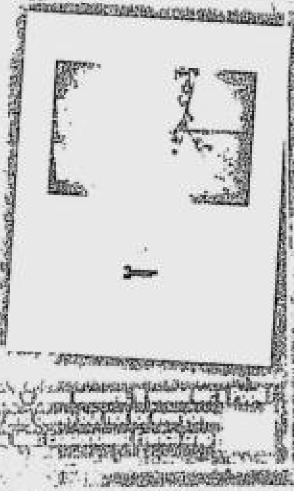

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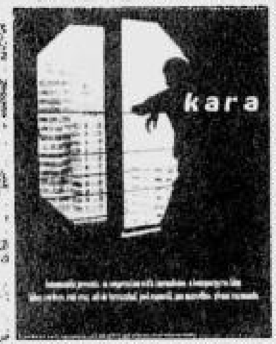

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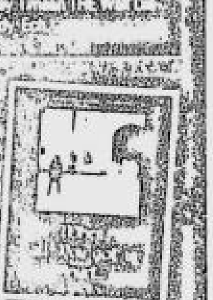

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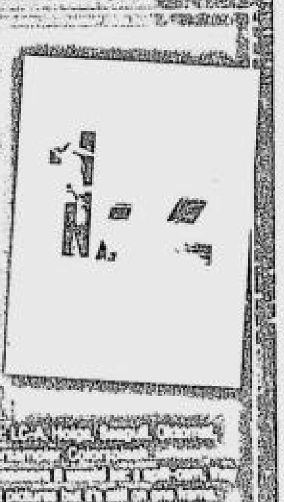

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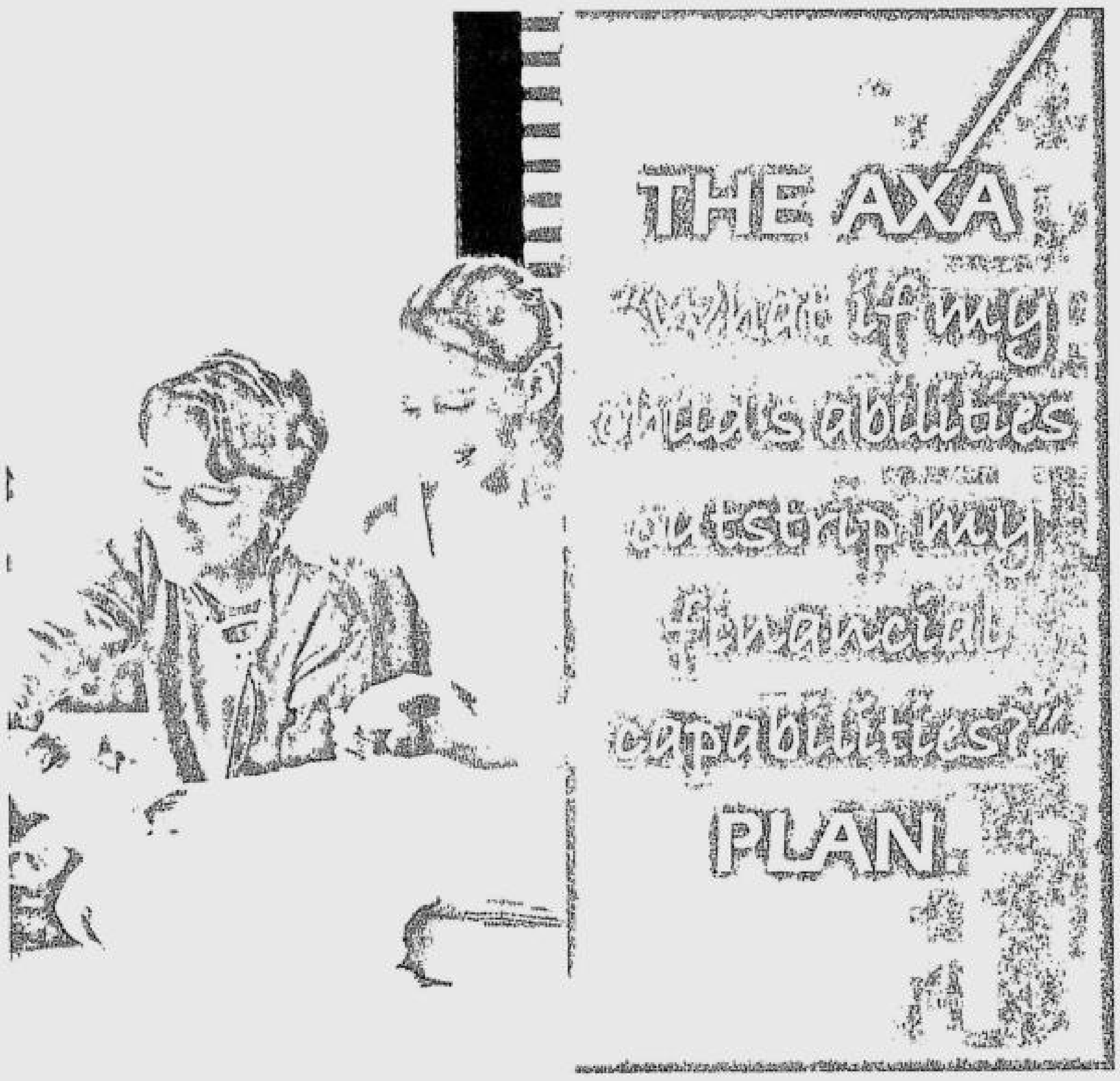
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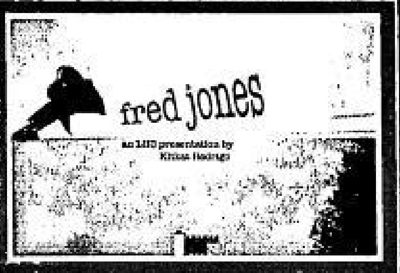

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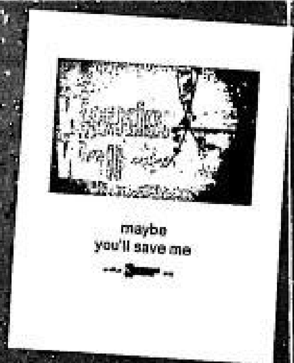

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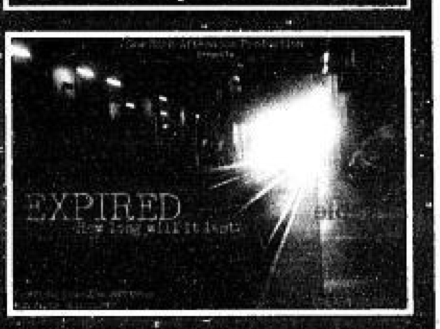

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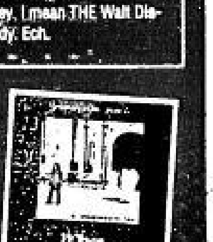
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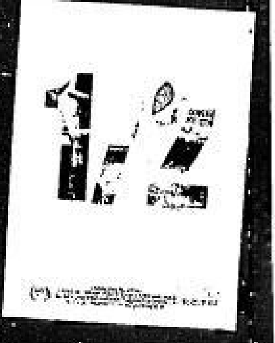

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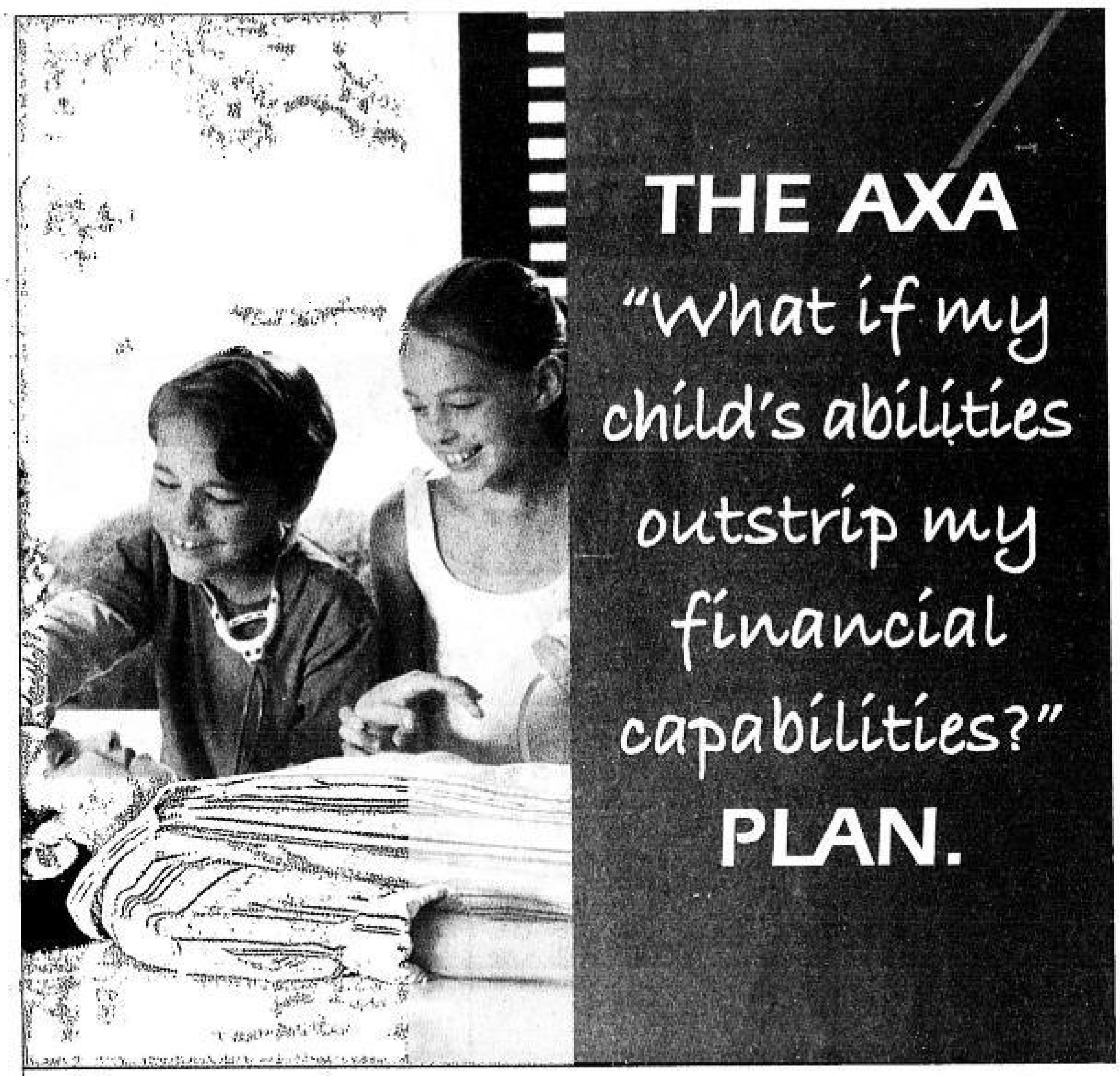
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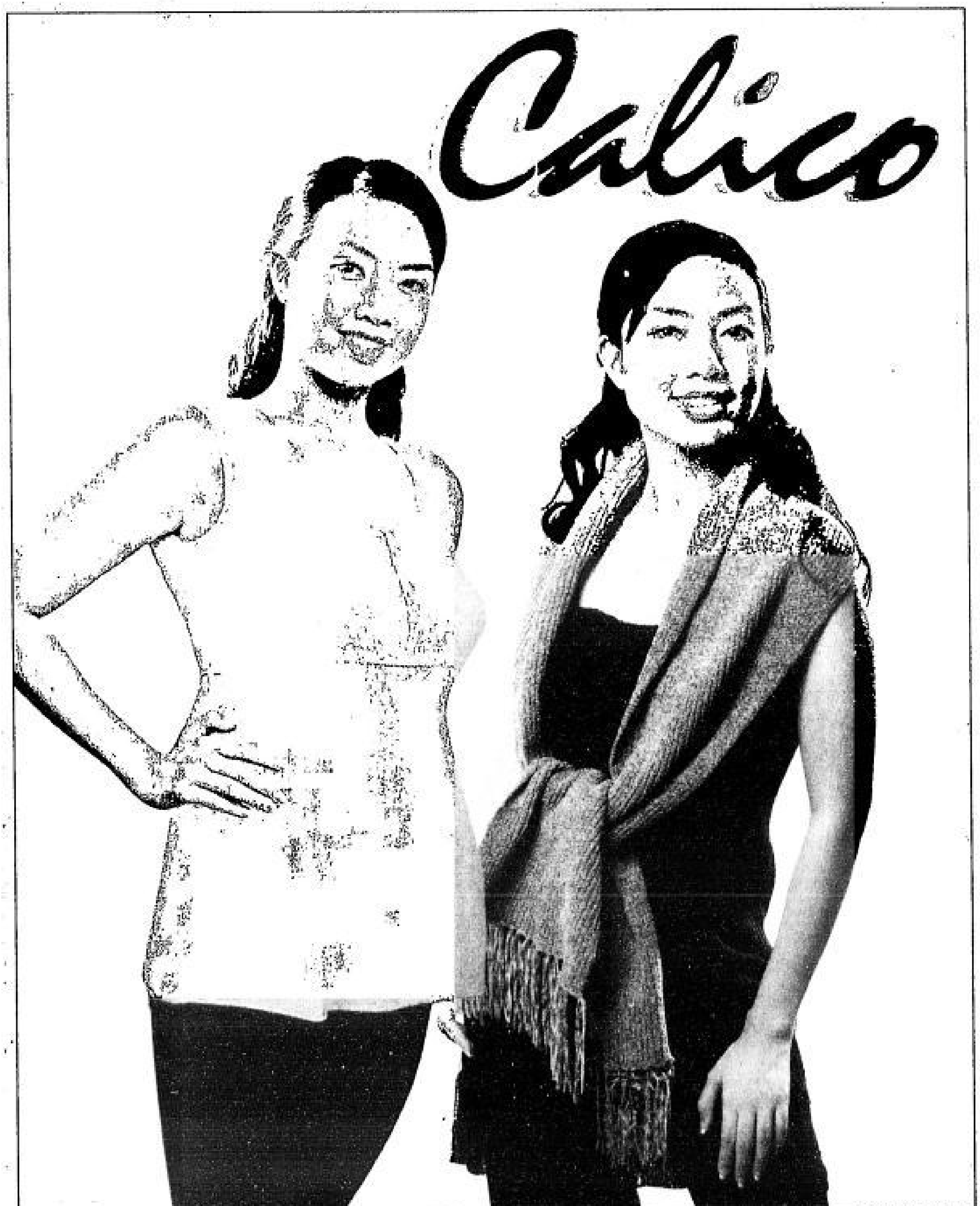

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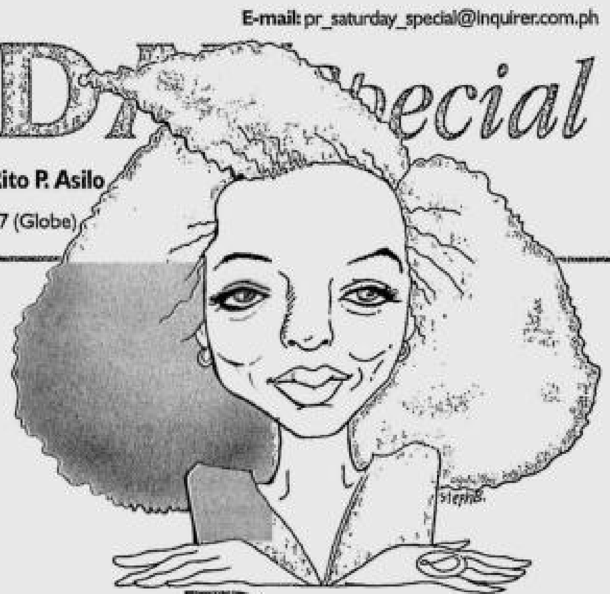
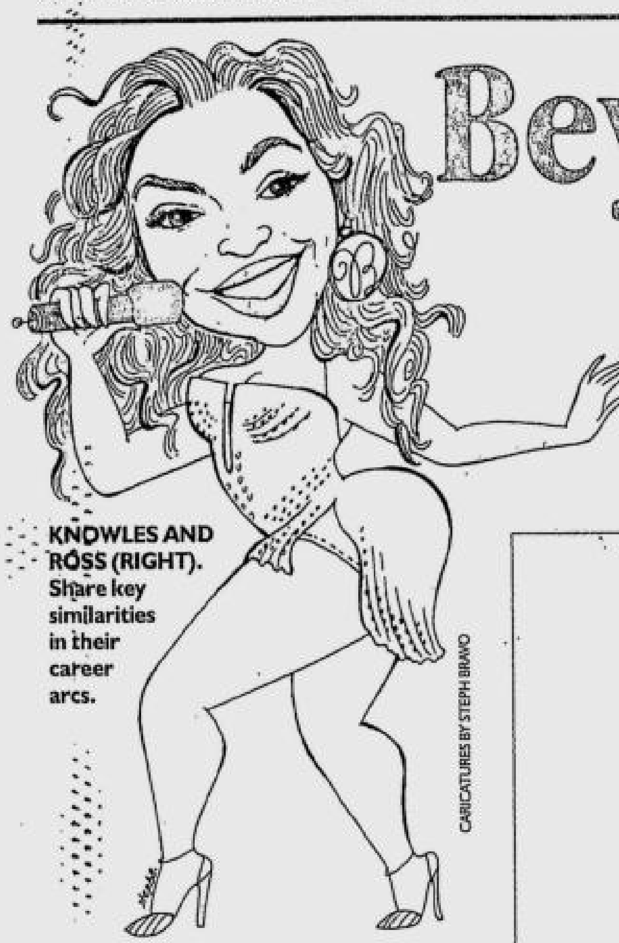
Beyoncé & Diana Ross compared

Beyoncé should periodically reinvent herself if she wants to 'grow old' in the biz





KNOWLES AND ROSS (RIGHT). Share key similarities in their career arcs.

CARICATURES BY STEPH BRAVO

By Nestor U. Torre

BEYONCÉ KNOWLES IS AT the top of the music world, setting records, winning awards, and starring in sold-out concerts all over the world. She has also established herself as a beauty and fashion icon, dazzling her cadres of fans everywhere she goes.

Although Beyoncé is her own person, her current mega-success reminds industry veterans of a similar triumph enjoyed in the '70s by Diana Ross.

Remarkable

The similarities in their career arcs are remarkable: Diana began her singing career with a group, the Supremes, while Beyoncé did the same with Destiny's Child.

After some years, Diana went solo and attained immense success. Beyoncé is currently doing the same thing. The latest feather in her cap is the American Music Awards' International Artist Award of Excellence.

In time, Diana tried her luck in the movies, starring in the dramatic musical film bio, "Lady Sings the Blues" and "The Wiz." Last year, Beyoncé topbilled the movie version of the hit stage musical, "Dreamgirls," and the production has been cited as the highest grossing musical film ever.

In the light of these key similarities, perhaps it would do Beyoncé good if she studied how Diana Ross' career fared after she had passed her prime:

Iconic image

Some industry observers feel that the veteran singing star dipped in popularity because she didn't make an effort to revitalize her repertoire with new songs and styles, and concentrated on refining her already iconic image.

So, if Beyoncé wants to "grow old" in the biz, she should "do a Madonna" and periodically reinvent herself. And, if she wants to star in another movie, she should learn from her experience in "Dreamgirls" and not settle for the lesser role, dramatically speaking.

Now, to the key focus of this piece: If we compare Diana and Beyoncé as singing and performing artists, who wins out? First, we must note that their singing styles are quite different, with Diana opting for the more "classic pop" or sophisticated approach.

For her part, Beyoncé has made it big at a relatively younger age, so while sophistication is also part of her image mix, she stresses a younger, hotter and more funky approach.

Result

This means that Beyoncé is connecting better with the mass show biz audience, which is primarily young. As a result, her success is more overwhelming—but, it could also run the risk of ebbing, if she sticks to one performance style for too long, and the notoriously fickle youth and young-adult markets could quickly tire of her.

This is not as theoretical as it may seem. In the recent American Music Awards, in fact, Fergie edged Beyoncé out for the Best Female Pop-Rock Artist honors. So, it really is time to shake a leg, even for a superstar like Beyoncé.

A final, instructive note: Fergie is *also* the product of a singing group, the Black-Eyed Peas, and went solo only last year. How about that? What goes around, comes around!

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DAY IN, NIGHT OUT

Fun trip through visual and performing arts yields rich results

By Nestor U. Torre

NOV. 17 WAS A PARTICULARLY full and rewarding day for us. In the morning, we went to the Saturday Salcedo Market for its annual Art Fair. We were gratified to see so many booths filled with all sorts of artworks done by collectives and schools' art departments.

However, a closer inspection revealed that some of the artworks were "inspired" by name artists—including Picasso. We hope that, in future art fairs, artists would force themselves to go beyond the facile ploy of going down the road twice-traveled, and sharing their *own* visions of the world.

Images

Among the more original renderings were sculptures and mobiles made out of junk metal, indigenous people's artworks, a fusion of photography and painting, whimsical "animal angel" images, and unique fillips like coconut art and using *banig* as canvas.

These delights gave us a visual high, so we left the Art Fair feeling elated. We were even more gratified to see families happily carrying the artworks they'd purchased out of the fair grounds.

In the afternoon, we caught Star Cinema's latest release, "One More Chance," at a Market! Market! theater, and were impressed to see that it was playing to an SRO crowd. It's been quite a while since we've seen so many people patronizing a local film, so it was cause for celebration.

That night, an overflow crowd of art lovers filled the new Art Verite gallery at Serendra, The Fort, Global City, Taguig City, for "Essence," an exhibit of recent works by acclaimed glass sculptor, Ramon Orlina.

Techniques and themes

The exhibit was warmly received by gallery buffs because it showcased several advances in the sculptor's techniques and themes.

Most noticeable of all was his homage to the female form, which in this latest exhibit has peaked with the addition of facial features to his once stylized nude studies.

True, the female faces are generally impassive and even cold in expression, but this doesn't have a negative effect on viewers. In fact, it makes the images more iconic, conjuring intimations of the classical past, all the way to resonances of Egyptian masks.

Another development is the use of tattoo designs in Pintado sculptures that specifically evoke the Filipino ethnic ethos.

And a wider range of materials indicates Orlina's growing flexibility and range as an artist. Aside from his signature green Asahi glass, "Essence" showcases pieces in black glass, bronze and amber crystal.

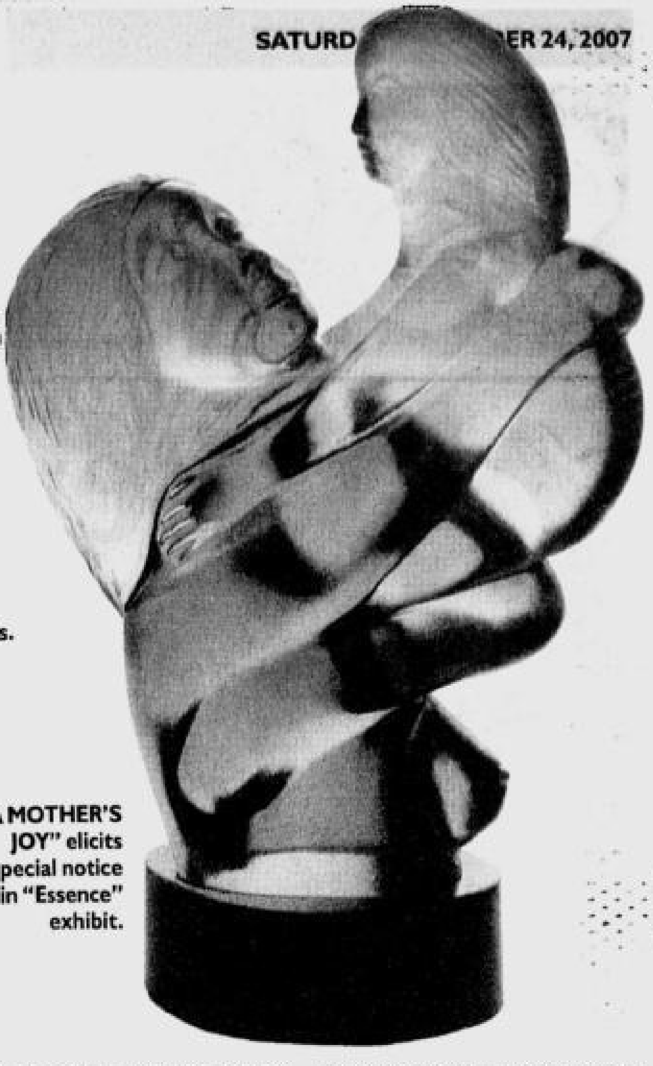
Significant step

The most dominant pieces are sculpted "landscapes"—"Makiling" and "Emerald City"—again, a significant step forward from Orlina's usually focused rather than "panoramic" works. And, it was interesting to see how the sculptor successfully dealt with the different challenges involved.

VALDES. Young standout.

After Orlina's exhibit, we rushed to Music Museum to catch the New Voice Company's staging of "Into the Woods," the hit Sondheim-Lapine musical that creatively tweaks and combines a number of well-loved fairy tales to make their escapist protagonist (and members of the audience, as well) face reality.

ORLINA. New directions.



"A MOTHER'S JOY" elicits special notice in "Essence" exhibit.

Musical-theater talents

The fun-filled and tuneful show briskly and imaginatively directed by Rito Asilo delighted viewers. For our part, we were particularly impressed with the high level of musical-theater talents featured in the show.

Standout performers included Cathy Azanza as Cinderella, Tomyy Abuel as the Mysterious Man, Crisel Consunji as Little Red Riding Hood, Juno Henares as Cinderella's Stepmother, Menchu Lauchengco-Yulo as the Baker's Wife, Angela Padilla as Rapunzel, Lynn Sherman as the Witch, Joaqui Valdes as Jack, Michael Williams as the Baker, and Jamie Wilson as Cinderella's Prince and the Wolf.

What an embarrassment of musical-theater riches! We felt just a little bit sad, however, that all those fine talents were performing in an American musical, instead of an original Filipino work. Well, perhaps next year?

Let's end this brief appreciation with the observation that, of all the exceptional musical talents in the show, it was Joaqui Valdes who elicited the most applause and shrieks from the audience.

With his combination of looks, voice, thespic intelligence and presence, Joaqui could be the next big thing to hit the local musical-theater scene this year. Let's hope he plays his cards right from here on in.

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo (center) with (from left) Sandy Masigan, Charito Planas, Jullie Y. Daza, Deedee Siytangco, Cerge Remonde, Joanne Rae Ramirez, Domini Torrevillas, Chay Santiago and the author.

Dining with the President

STREET SMART

Mandy Navasero

CERGE REMONDE INVITED the core group of Sofitel Philippine Plaza's Bulong Pulungan Media Forum to dinner with President Macapagal-Arroyo in Malacañang. The invitation came at the end of October during the height of the ZTE-NBN issue. Our request to bring our camera with us inside was denied. "We have Palace photographers," Remonde said.

While waiting for the rest of the eight invited guests, Cerge showed us the St. Joseph Chapel, which was part of the 1978-79 Palace renovations. Cerge suggested: "Make a wish!"

Aloud and within hearing distance, I prayed to get my camera back before meeting the President. As we left the chapel, lo and behold! Remonde handed me my Nikon D200!

Second year

We went up the Music Room. This is the second year that the group has had dinner with the President at the Rizal Room, which used to be the office of former President Fidel V. Ramos.

President Macapagal-Arroyo was chatty and friendly. She talked about a "no-pressure diet and working out at the gym" to keep fit. She reads books "related to my job, like 'The World is Flat' by Friedman. I don't talk to friends but to God and I'm focused on improving the country's economy," she shared.

***

LRI Design Plaza's big sale is extended until Dec. 1. Visit the Panasonic Art of Life Photo Exhibit at the second floor of the building. The Batanes Photo Safari is giving a big discount for trips scheduled next year. Call 899-1767, or e-mail mandynavasero@yahoo.com.

Canine charmers gave human celebs a run for their money

By Behn Cervantes

TOM CRUISE, BRAD PITT, JUlia Roberts and Angelina Jolie are today's top box-office stars. Over the years, however, Hollywood's box-office champions didn't just come in human form, there were a number of canine charmers, too!

Since the 1930s, four-footed film performers like Lassie and Rin Tin Tin drew hordes of paying viewers to the cineplexes. Those well-bred (pun intended) dogs starred in a series of films that captured moviegoers' imagination, especially between the '30s and the '50s. Their appeal was potent at the box office, and sometimes, they gave their human costars a run for their money!

LASSIE. Tinseltown's most popular collie.

Welfare and protection

However, because their popularity lasted so long, it was necessary to replace the original "performers" with younger dogs. Besides, organizations that looked after the welfare and protection of animals demanded substitutes so as not to "exhaust" the popular "stars."

The original Rin Tin Tin died in 1932. Eighty-nine other dogs succeeded him! On the other hand, hundreds of Lassie's replacements have since taken over the famous collie's role on the big and small screens.

Lassie's films capitalized on Technicolor, which underscored the dog's wonderful colors and fur. He likewise benefited from the movie industry's technological advancements and solid studio support. His signature song, "Whistle," for example, was composed by prominent musician, Les Baxter.

In the highly successful "Lassie Come Home" and "The Courage of Lassie," a lovely 11-year-old teenage girl named Elizabeth Taylor and her chum, Roddy McDowall, shared the focus of cinematic interest with their equally glowing canine costar.

Both Rin Tin Tin and Lassie have fought against gangsters, thieves and other despicable men in defense of their human friends. In fact, in another film, Lassie even had an encounter with the Nazis! Furthermore, he garnered new sets of fans with the advent and popularity of television.

Sophisticated duo

Another celebrity dog, Asta, was featured in "The Thin Man," starring William Powell and Myrna Loy. The sophisticated duo shared the limelight with the screwball pet—who often stole scenes from them!

Exceptional talent ...

From page F3

rounds of different colleges all over the country, conducting surveys and workshops for new scriptwriters.

In addition, we've staged some of their best works, so they can learn valuable lessons from seeing their scripts produced. The length of time devoted to these surveys is flexible, depending on the preference or felt needs of the particular college.

Some choose to allot only one day to the writing survey, while others opt for intensive workshops to go into detailed training to write all forms of scripts for theater, radio, TV and film.

Special attention

And, all this time, while we mentor everybody, we look out for the few potentially great talents, and give them the special attention and support they need.

Aside from scriptwriting, we also conduct surveys and workshops in acting and directing. This is our little way of paying the arts back for all of the opportunities, benefits and delights that have come our way in the course of our career.

If you feel that your college would benefit from such writing surveys or workshops, call Jan at 0915 203-3336.

Grand Christmas sale at ManoMano

From page F4

festivities, also at the Mall of Asia. They enjoyed Nick of Treats (mall-wide trick or treating), the School of Ghoul, the Ghostly Gallery, Butcher's Block, Nick's creepy characters, the Grime and Slime Wall, the Nicktoons Screaming Room and fireworks display!

'Always Yang'

At 11 a.m. on Nov. 28 at Makati Shangri-La Hotel, the "Always Yang" event launches George Yang's Klassikal Music Foundation, the businessman-singer-music lover's initiative to help deserving artists develop their talent in classical music.

CN's Awards of Excellence

At 10:30 a.m. on Nov. 29 at SM Mall of Asia, Cartoon Network holds the grand finals for its Awards of Excellence, which will go to the best young singer, dancer and entertainer.

Tribute to Lino Brocka

At 2:30 p.m. tomorrow on dzRH, Lisa Macuja's "Art2Art" show pays tribute to the late, great National Artist for Film, Lino Brocka, with CCP artistic director Fernando Josef reminiscing about the years when he worked with Brocka at Peta.

'Snow White'

Starting Dec. 5, Ballet Philippines presents "Snow White" at the CCP. Made into a ballet production by Effie Nañas and restaged by Ramon Victoria, the well-loved story will be retold in dance by Rhea Dumdum, Candice Adea and Carissa Adea as Snow White and Angel Gabriel, Ramcy Cortista and Biag Gaongen as Prince Charming. Performances are at 10 a.m., 2 p.m., and 7 p.m. until Dec. 15. Call 551-0221 or 832-6011.

FOXX. Plays an FBI agent in latest starrer.

AVELLANA. Honored with "Remembrances" concert.

Daisy H. Avellana

National Artist for Theater Daisy H. Avellana was honored last Nov. 17 by St. Paul University Manila with "Remembrances," a concert featuring the SPU Manila Chorale, Camille Monique Gallano, Maria Isabel Canoy, Noemi Manikan and Beah Darada Gumarang, and readings by Tessie Luz, Isabel Muñoz, Angelita Martinez Florio and Jose Mari Avellana.

'The Death of Memory'

From Nov. 29 to Dec. 15, Tanghalang Ateneo presents its staging of Glenn Mas' "The Death of Memory," about four people trapped by their traumatic memories in a purgatorial prison in a nowhere land.

The play examines the strength of the human will to live and choose, to fight against the paralyzing past, and to move on. Call 426-6001 loc. 5121.

'CD Blow-Out'

From 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. today at the 10th floor, 1487 Quezon ave., QC, "CD Blow-out," a big audio and video sale offers up to 90 percent discount on CDs, DVDs, VCDs and cassettes. Other sale dates are on Dec. 1, 2, 8, 9, 15 and 16.

At Enchanted Kingdom

Today at 6 p.m., Enchanted Kingdom in Sta. Rosa, Laguna, screens "Shrek 3" at the Bandstand area. Tomorrow, the film treat is "Spider-Man 3." There will also be exciting games and surprise prizes. Call 830-2111 to 16, or log on to www.enchantedkingdom.com.ph.

'The Namesake'

The searing drama, "The Namesake," opens exclusively at Ayala Malls theaters on Nov. 28. The film's story spans two generations, clashing cultures and very different ways of life that impact on each other, only to become lovingly intertwined. Mira Nair directs a cast led by Kal Penn and Jacinda Barrett.

Allan Manalo

Stand-up comic Allan Manalo holds a beginner's comedy workshop today, and an advanced comedy workshop tomorrow. Call 533-9316.

'The Kingdom'

Oscar-winning actor Jamie Foxx topbills the acutely topical film, "The Kingdom," a war against terror thriller. Foxx plays an FBI agent sent to the Middle East to find the killers of a hundred Americans murdered by a bomb explosion in a housing project. Jennifer Garner and Israeli actor Ashraf Barhom co-star.

Tropezz

Emerging as one of the hottest bars in Greenbelt 3, Tropezz has become a popular venue for chic private and corporate parties. Its gourmet cuisine is described as Philippine and Mediterranean fusion. Open from 11 a.m. to 1 a.m.

Reunion

Batch '93 of Meycauayan College's high school department will have a grand reunion on Dec. 1 at the school gymnasium. Call Elaine at 0917 824-8129.

Top singers spread hope and cheer in 'iDream'

By Rito P. Asilo

ALVAREZ, SEÑA AND LAUCHENGCO (INSET). Soaring renditions.

LAST MONTH, WE NOTED THE PAUCITY of major releases in the recording industry. For pop music junkies like us, it looked like it was going to be slim pickings for the last quarter of the year—then came the delightful deluge of an exciting harvest, with new releases from both local and international artists:

While Alicia Keys' "As I Am" storms the Billboard 200 chart with jaw-dropping sales (it debuts at No.1 this week after selling 742,000 copies, the best sales week for a solo female artist since Norah Jones' "Feels Like Home" shipped a million copies in 2004), other conspicuous new titles include Britney Spears' "Blackout," Jay-Z's "American Gangster," Carrie Underwood's "Carnival Ride," Josh Groban's "Noel," Andrea Bocelli's "Vivere," Michael Ball's "Back to Bacharach," and Garth Brooks ("The Ultimate Hits"). But, these contemporary artists don't have the chart to themselves in the current recording season's multi-genre playing field.

Musical treats

The musical treats continue with the comeback releases of Celine Dion ("Taking Chances"), Bruce Springsteen ("Magic"), Eagles ("Long Road Out of Eden"), and some blasts from the not-so-distant past: Duran Duran ("Red Carpet Massacre"), The Backstreet Boys ("Unbreakable") and The Spice Girls ("Greatest Hits").

On the local front, swooning fans gobbled up the latest albums of controversial heartthrobs, Piolo Pascual ("Timeless") and Sam Milby ("A Little Too Perfect"). But, our local pick for this week is IRC Music's concept album, "iDream!," an omnibus project that compiles songs of hope and gratitude.

"iDream!" gathers some of the finest pipes from the fields of recording and the legitimate stage: There's Robert Seña, who, despite curiously misplaced laughter midway through the song, doesn't disappoint in his show-stopping rendition of Earl Brown's "If I Can Dream"—a soaring vocal bravado that deserves to be heard!

Mainstream sensibility

Despite losing "Somewhere Over the Rainbow's" wistful quality, Jamie Rivera sings the guitar-driven ditty with note-perfect clarity, precision and mainstream sensibility.

Jenine Desiderio turns in an earnest cover of Ryan Cayabyab's sweeping OPM classic, "Nais Ko," although her melodies are occasionally drowned out when the powerful but heavy-handed vocal execution of her backup vocalists, Cuadro, robs the song of its melodic fluidity.

Bituin Escalante provides a fresh and velvety interpretation of Paul Simon's "Bridge Over Troubled Water." Marvin Querido's multifaceted arrangement allows the well-loved standard to vacillate between being a smoky ballad and a soul-tinged slow-rock tune. When Butuin sings, it's hard not to notice!

Raymond Lauchengco's appropriately sonorous reworking of Mandy Moore's chart-topping hit, "Only Hope" (from "A Walk to Remember"), reminds us of how much the industry has been missing out on the priceless voice behind the '80s OPM hits, "Shadow of Time," "Dream Boy," "Kapag Puso'y Sinugatan," "Farewell" and "I Need You Back."

Golden pipes

Twenty three years after "Bagets," Lauchengco's voice is still as rich, clear, melodic and pitch-perfect as his sister Menchu's—although the song could have soared more with a higher key. Golden pipes surely run in the Lauchengco household! (Check out Raymond's big-band versions of the new wave tunes of the '80s in his latest solo album, "Full Circle.")

Unfortunately, Luke Mejares' remake of Rodgers and Hammerstein's "Climb Every Mountain" doesn't quite cut it for us—it's breathy and emotionally incongruous to the song's inspiring lyrics, thus it loses its lyrical appeal and gut-wrenching punch in its reworked, R&B milieu.

Gines Tan's anthemic "Magsimula Ka," sung by the album's featured artists, likewise falls short of our expectations. Its timeless message is no doubt a fitting valedictory to an impressive collection that wishes to spread hope, optimism and cheer, but the vocal distribution among its singers doesn't quite mesh, so it has an incoherent and curiously disjointed feel about it.

Crystal-clear alto

We've always loved Isay Alvarez's crystal-clear alto, so it comes as no surprise that the best track in the 13-song compilation—Willie Buena's "Sa Bawat Tagpo ng Buhay" (from the movie, "7 Tagpo")—comes from the songstress, who doubles up as the album's executive producer.

As Isay's voice glides seamlessly from one moving thought to another, she convinces us to listen closely to what she has to say, as she sings the song's every note with stirring simplicity and bell-like clarity.

Exceptional talent is exceedingly rare

By Nestor U. Torre

AFTER MANY YEARS OF CONDUCTING workshops and directing all sorts of performers in the theater, TV and films, we've come to the conclusion that real talent (in acting, scriptwriting and directing) is rare.

Some people may disagree. They feel that there are many new talents just waiting to be discovered, developed and given the right breaks so they can truly shine.

We agree that there are hundreds, even thousands of talents out there, and we've done perhaps more than our share of mentoring and developing them.

Proficient work

But, we've also noted that, while many new talents can be trained to do proficient work, the exceptionally gifted turn out to comprise only a handful, less than 10 percent of the total number of workshoppers.

In the light of this realization, while we continue to mentor anybody who's interested, we keep an eager eye out for the potentially exceptional prospect, and go out of our way to develop and motivate them. In addition, we try to give them breaks *early* in their careers, which is when they really need them.

Our logic is simple: Great talents who are helped to be able to do their best work are potential national treasures who can come up with many outstanding productions or performances in the course of their careers, and the country would be the richer for it.

Insightful work

On the other hand, if those few exceptional talents are ignored or frustrated, as tragically happens much too often in these parts, we would lose most or all of the insightful work they're capable of, and that is such a great loss.

That's why we've been making the

EXCEPTIONAL/ F2

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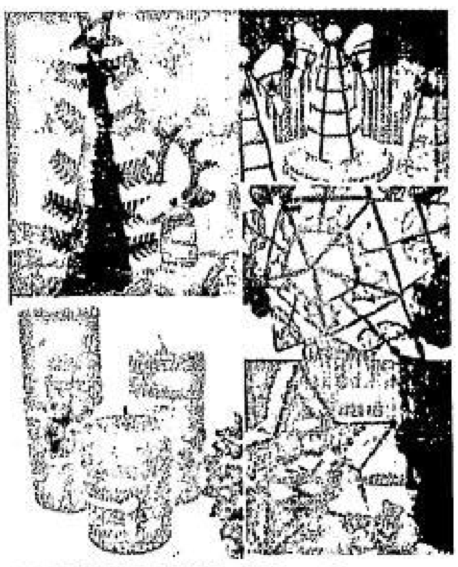
Grand Christmas sale at ManoMano

THE MANOMANO FAIR TRADE STORE AT 2594 Lamayan st. in Sta. Ana, Manila, is holding a grand Christmas sale (up to 60 percent off) until Dec. 22.

MONTAGE

The store is a showcase for exquisite and varied Philippine handicrafts from all over the country, and carries Christmas decorations, houseware, home decor, fashion accessories, arts and crafts, and gifts. ManoMano's fine products are prized both here and abroad. Call (632) 561-0395, fax (632) 563-4632, or email manomano@safrudi.com/localsafrudi@pldt-sl.net.


MANOMANO Fair Trade Store showcases exquisite handicrafts and Christmas décor until Dec. 22.

Parachute Band

The Parachute Band from New Zealand performed last night at the Convenarium, Crossroad 77. The acclaimed group also promoted its new album, "Roadmaps and Revelations," released by Integrity Music, at a "meet and greet" reception at the Shangri-La Plaza Mall last Nov. 22.

'Mr. Magorium's Wonder Emporium'

Molly Mahoney (Natalie Portman) loves her job as manager of Mr. Magorium's Wonder Emporium, the most enchanting and extraordinary toy store in the world.

Mr. Magorium (Dustin Hoffman) is a self-proclaimed "wonder aficionado" who's reached 243 years old without aging a day over 65! But, the time has come for him to hand the store over to Mahoney and an accountant, Henry Weston (Jason Bateman), is brought in to find out what the store is worth.

HOFFMAN. Topbills sci-fi fantasy.

As Magorium's departure draws near, the store and its unique denizens lose their sense of joy and wonder—but return to their once remarkable state once Weston starts to believe in magic and Mahoney learns to believe in herself!

'Big Help 2007'

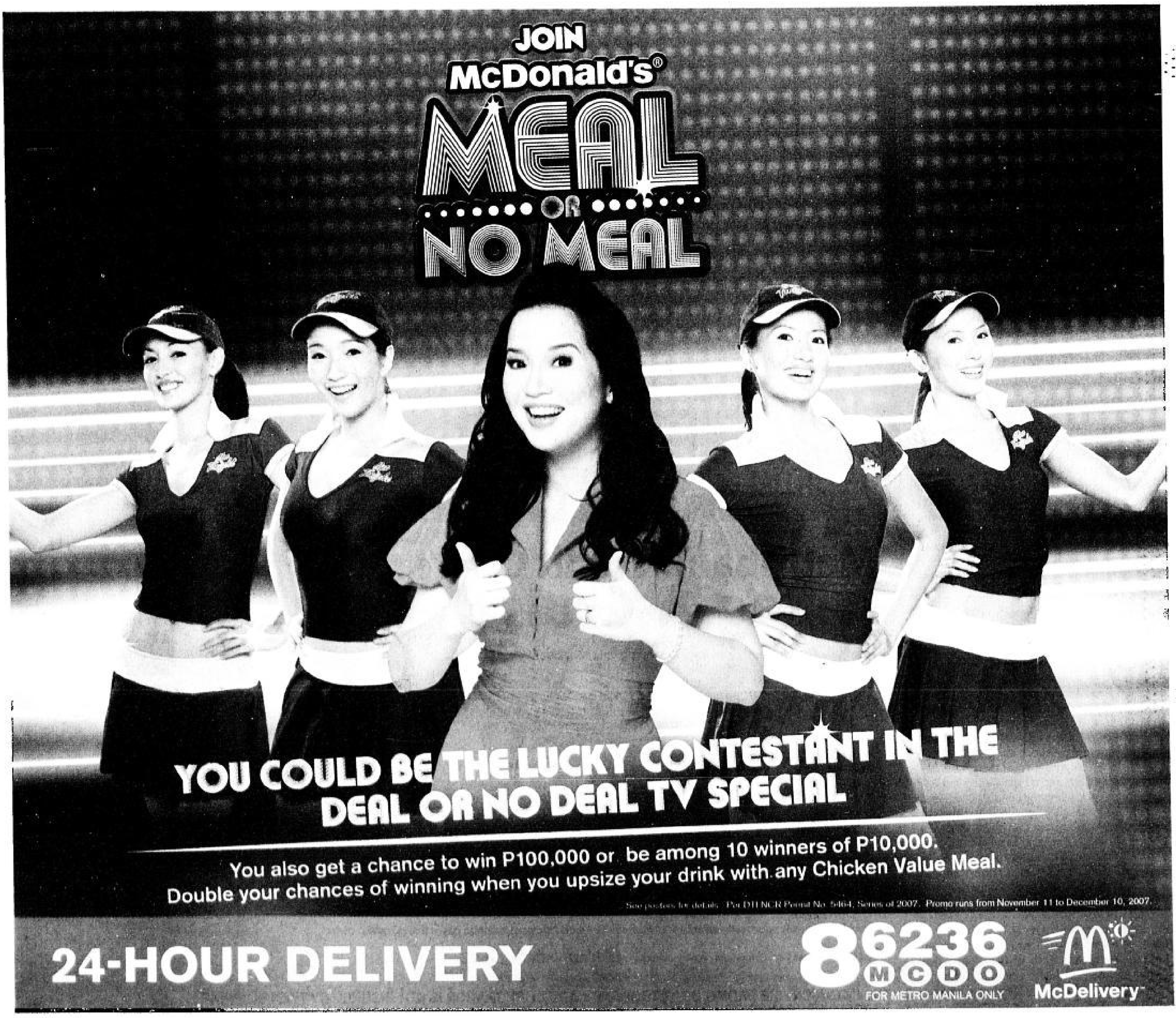
Nickelodeon's "The Big Help 2007" campaign ends with a bang on Dec. 1, so Nicksters are invited to the SM Mall of Asia from 2 to 4 p.m. on that date for a big sharing activity that's also loads of fun.

BARRETT. Stars in Mira Nair's "The Namesake."

Kids are encouraged to bring something (books, cloths, toys, spare change, etc.) to share, for donation to the GK-Batang Bayani group. Hosts are Sam Concepcion and Robi Joseph, and Sugarpop will perform. Log on to www.nicksplat.com.

Earlier, thousands of kids joined Nickelodeon's "Mischief Madness" Halloween

GRAND/F2



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IN THIS ISSUE
■ Hilda-Jay love team remembered /G3

SATURDAY Special

NOW SHOWING

MARSDEN, ADAMS AND DEMPSEY. Play "Enchanted's" charming protagonists.

Fusion of animation, live action brings Disney's fairy tale to sparkling life

By Rito P. Asilo

"Enchanted"
D: Kevin Lima
S: Amy Adams, Patrick Dempsey, James Marsden, Susan Sarandon and Julie Andrews

AMY ADAMS GIVES DISNEY'S FAIRY-TALE conventions a sprightly, fun-filled tweaking in Kevin Lima's bewitching musical rom-com, "Enchanted," which follows the adventures of Giselle (Adams), a beautiful, Cinderella-like princess living in a magical, animated fairy-tale land called Andalacia.

As is often the way in these sugarcoated cautionary stories, happiness doesn't come easy to their gullible, much-too-trusting protagonists, who must suffer first before finding the ultimate payoff—their "happily ever after."

After her destined meeting with dashing Prince Edward (James Marsden), however, Giselle is tricked by the threatened Queen Narissa (the ageless Susan Sarandon) on her way to the altar—and is banished by Edward's wicked stepmother to the real world, a place where "there are no happy endings": Modern-day New York!

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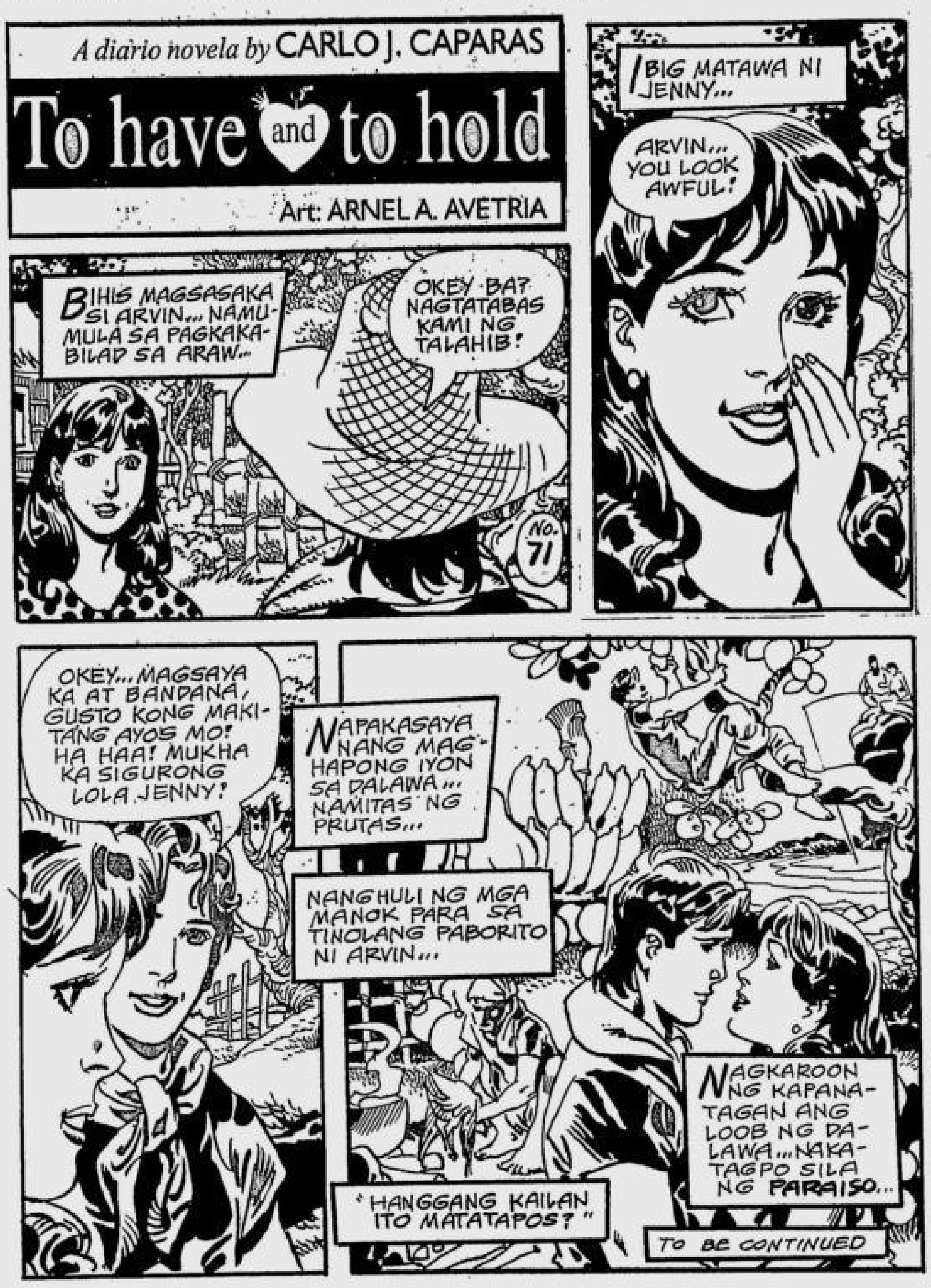
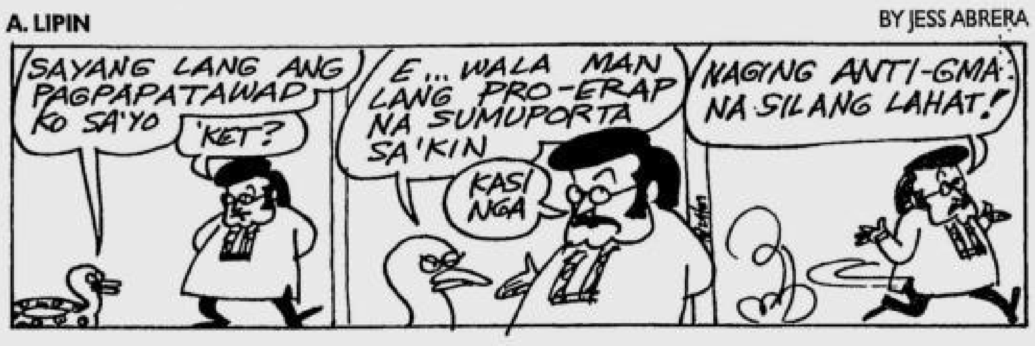
A diario novela by CARLO J. CAPARAS

To have and to hold

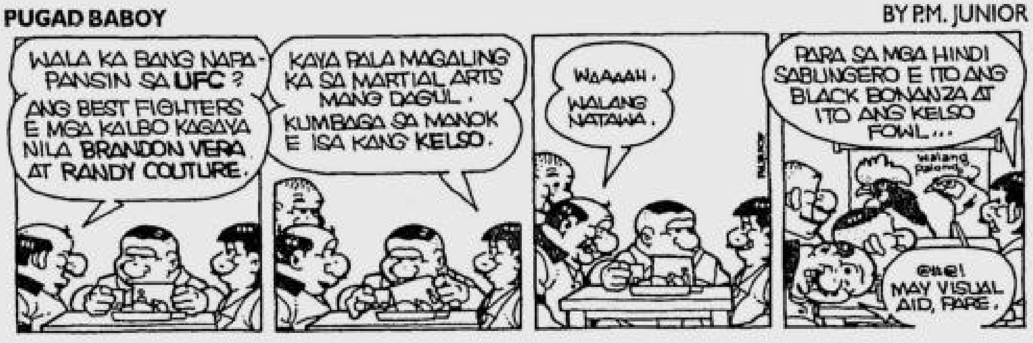
Art: ARNEL A. AVETRIA


BIHIS MAGSASAKA SI ARVIN... NAMUMULA SA PAGKAKABILAD SA ARAW...
OKEY BA? NAGTATABAS KAMI NG TALAHIB!
No. 71
IBIG MATAWA NI JENNY...
ARVIN... YOU LOOK AWFUL!
OKEY... MAGSAYA KA AT BANDANA, GUSTO KONG MAKITANG AYOS MO! HA HAA! MUKHA KA SIGURONG LOLA JENNY!
NAPAKASAYA NANG MAGHAPONG IYON SA DALAWA... NAMITAS NG PRUTAS...
NANGHULI NG MGA MANOK PARA SA TINOLANG PABORITO NI ARVIN...
NAGKAROON NG KAPANATAGAN ANG LOOB NG DALAWA... NAKATAGPO SILA NG PARAISO...
"HANGGANG KAILAN ITO MATATAPOS?"
TO BE CONTINUED

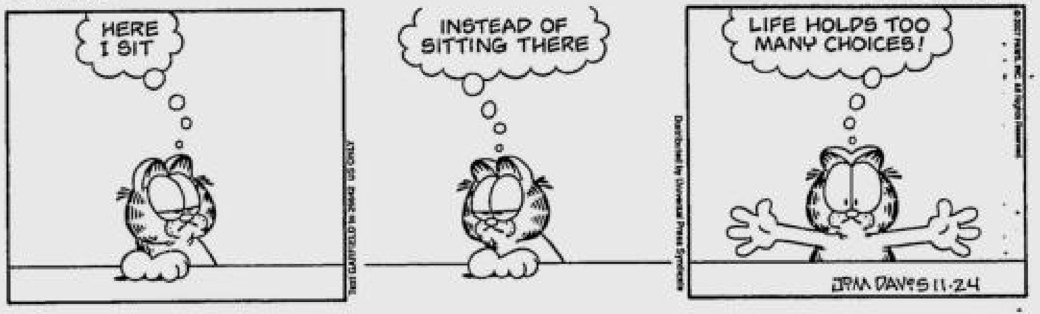
A. LIPIN BY JESS ABRERA


SAYANG LANG ANG PAGPAPATAWAD KO SA'YO
'KET?
E... WALA MAN LANG PRO-ERAP NA SUMUPORTA SA'KIN
KASI NGA
NAGING ANTI-GMA NA SILANG LAHAT!

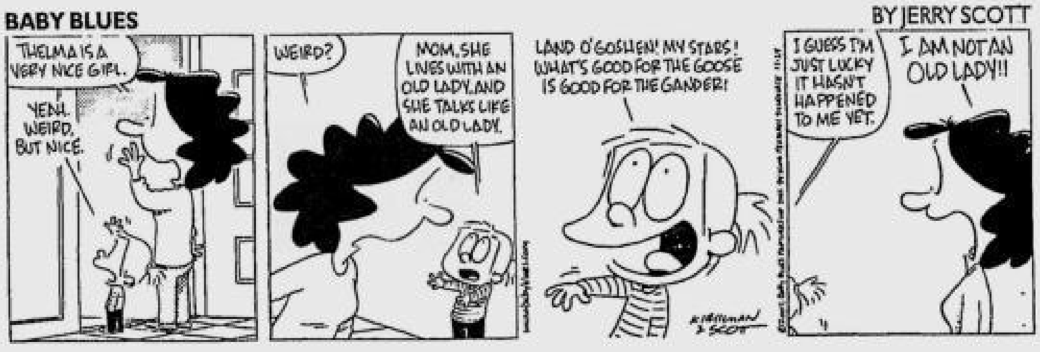
PUGAD BABOY BY P.M. JUNIOR


WALA KA BANG NAPAPANSIN SA UFC? ANG BEST FIGHTERS E MGA KALBO KAGAYA NILA BRANDON VERA AT RANDY COUTURE.
KAYA PALA MAGALING KA SA MARTIAL ARTS MANG DAGUL. KUMBAGA SA MANOK E ISA KANG KELSO.
WAAAAH. WALANG NATAWA.
PARA SA MGA HINDI SABUNGERO E ITO ANG BLACK BONANZA AT ITO ANG KELSO FOWL...
walang palong
ehe! MAY VISUAL AID, PARE.

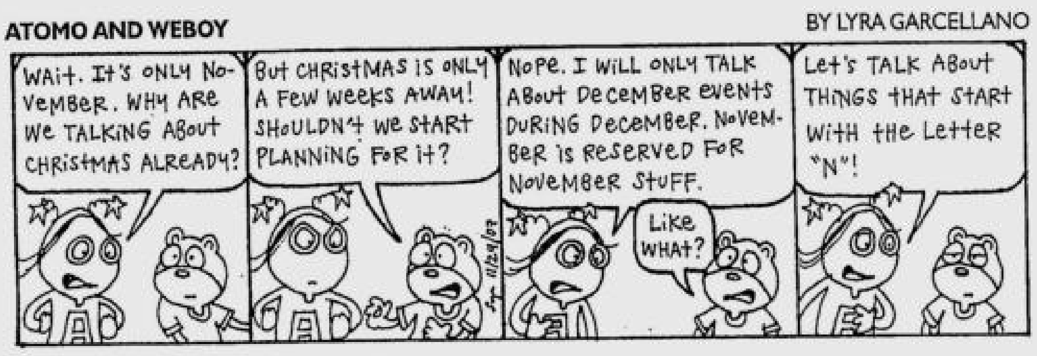
GARFIELD BY JIM DAVIS


HERE I SIT
INSTEAD OF SITTING THERE
LIFE HOLDS TOO MANY CHOICES!
JPM DAVIS 11-24

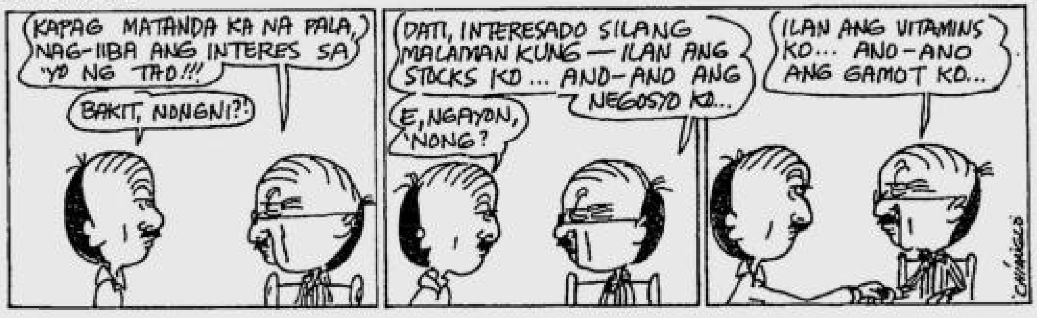
BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT


THELMA IS A VERY NICE GIRL.
YEAH. WEIRD, BUT NICE.
WEIRD?
MOM, SHE LIVES WITH AN OLD LADY, AND SHE TALKS LIKE AN OLD LADY.
LAND O'GOSHEN! MY STARS! WHAT'S GOOD FOR THE GOOSE IS GOOD FOR THE GANDER!
I GUESS I'M JUST LUCKY IT HASN'T HAPPENED TO ME YET.
I AM NOT AN OLD LADY!!
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

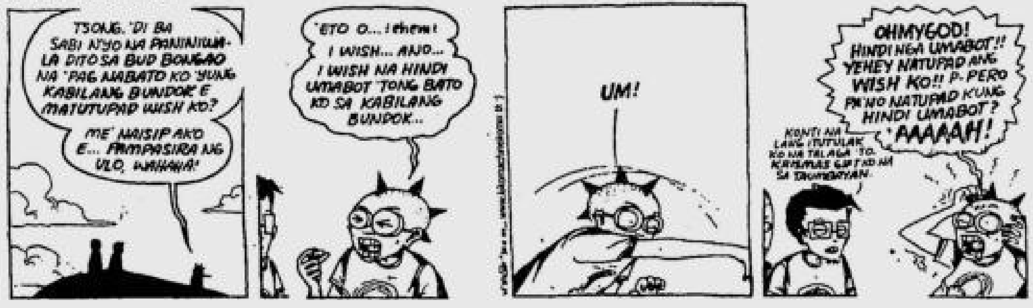
ATOMO AND WEBOY BY LYRA GARCELLANO


Wait. It's only November. Why are we talking about Christmas already?
But Christmas is only a few weeks away! Shouldn't we start planning for it?
Nope. I will only talk about December events during December. November is reserved for November stuff.
Like what?
Let's talk about things that start with the letter "N"!

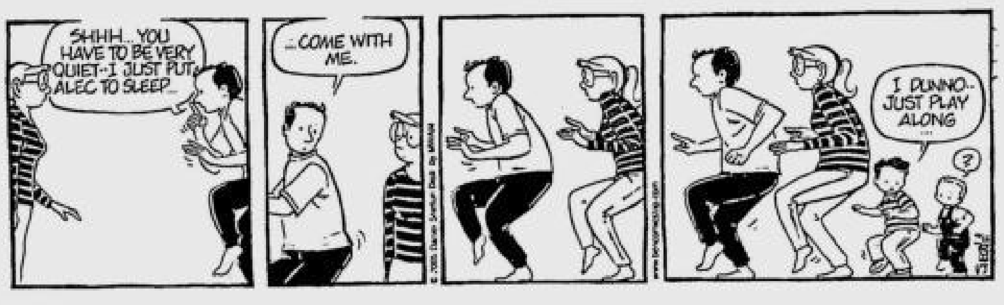
LOVEKNOTS BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


KAPAG MATANDA KA NA PALA, NAG-IIBA ANG INTERES SA 'YO NG TAO!!!
BAKIT, NONGNI?!
DATI, INTERESADO SILANG MALAMAN KUNG — ILAN ANG STOCKS KO ... ANO-ANO ANG NEGOSYO KO...
E, NGAYON, 'NONG?
ILAN ANG VITAMINS KO... ANO-ANO ANG GAMOT KO...
CHIONGLO

KIKO MACHINE BY MANIX ABRERA


TSONG, 'DI BA SABI N'YO NA PANINIWALA DITO SA BUD BONGAO NA 'PAG NABATO KO 'YUNG KABILANG BUNDOK E MATUTUPAD WISH KO?
ME' NAISIP AKO E... PAMPASIRA NG ULO, WAHAHA!
'ETO O... !phew! I WISH... ANO... I WISH NA HINDI UMABOT 'TONG BATO KO SA KABILANG BUNDOK...
UM!
OHMYGOD! HINDI NGA UMABOT!! YEHEY NATUPAD ANG WISH KO!! P-PERO PA'NO NATUPAD KUNG HINDI UMABOT? 'AAAAAH!
KONTI NA LANG ITUTULAK KO NA TALAGA 'TO. KRISMAS GIFT KO NA SA TAUMBAYAN.

BEN BY DANIEL SHELTON


SHHH... YOU HAVE TO BE VERY QUIET--I JUST PUT ALEC TO SLEEP...
...COME WITH ME.
I DUNNO. JUST PLAY ALONG ...
?

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Individually distinct
9 Stick
15 Enters rudely
16 "Marcus Welby, M.D." co-star
17 Took no cards
18 Ease off
19 Verb form
20 Added up
22 Existing
24 More insolent
25 Leary's drug
26 Pres. pro __
28 Emigrant's subj.
29 Prevaricated
31 __ Alamos, NM
33 Flux density units
38 Get around
40 Signal for help
42 Flinch or start, e.g.
43 Overnight flight
45 Long of "The Broken Hearts Club"
47 Pocket bread
48 Will Ferrell film
50 Mexican Mme.
52 Morse unit
53 Pittsburgh players
58 Natural gas component
60 Sociable
62 Sweet herb
63 Garlicky poisonous gas
64 Roosevelt's chat spot
66 Decrease play
67 Serial segments
68 Sheep farmer's tools
69 Gentle quality

DOWN
1 Alcohol maker
2 Word with farming or care
3 Stiff
4 Span
5 Most unmannerly
6 Key-punch bus.
7 Side in a contest
8 Cornerstone abbr.
9 Side by side
10 1931 Oscar-winning actress
11 Doughnut centers
12 Nicholas Gage memoir
13 Hose down
14 Key PC key
21 Rap Dr.
23 Reef denizen
27 Nov. and Dec.
30 Ike's initials
32 Father's boy
34 Cal. abbr.
35 Saved
36 Series of radioactive elements
37 Like the man without a country
39 Makeup item
41 Palindromic sibling
44 Offense and defense numbers
46 "__ You Lonesome Tonight?"
49 TGIF part
51 If you're very lucky
53 Skedaddles
54 Hebrew scripture scroll
55 Follow afterward
56 Musical set in Argentina
57 Strongboxes
59 Is wearing
61 Chinese poet
65 Coast of Morocco

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	■	9	10	11	12	13	14
15								■	16					
17								■	18					
19					■	20		21						
22					23	■	24							
25			■	26		27	■	28			■	■	■	■
29			30	■	31		32	■	33		34	35	36	37
38				39	■	40		41	■	42				
43					44	■	45		46	■	47			
■	■	■	■	48		49	■	50		51	■	52		
53	54	55	56				57	■	58		59			
60								61	■	62				
63						■	64		65					
66						■	67							
68						■	69							

By Tom Pruce
Chicago, IL

11/24/07

Friday's Puzzle Solved

T	A	M	P	S	■	D	E	W	S	■	L	O	A	F
E	Q	U	I	P	■	E	L	O	Q	U	E	N	C	E
M	U	S	C	L	E	S	M	E	U	N	I	E	R	E
P	A	S	T	I	M	E	■	S	A	T	■	S	E	T
■	■	■	U	T	U	R	N	■	R	I	P	■	■	■
S	P	A	R	■	S	T	A	K	E	D	I	A	N	E
H	A	T	E	D	■	■	M	I	L	I	T	I	A	S
A	R	T	■	I	C	U	■	D	Y	E	■	M	I	T
R	E	A	B	S	O	R	B	■	■	S	T	E	L	E
P	U	R	L	O	N	I	O	N	S	■	E	R	S	E
■	■	■	U	R	N	■	P	E	L	T	S	■	■	■
I	S	M	■	D	I	V	■	W	A	S	T	A	G	E
R	O	U	T	E	V	E	G	E	T	A	B	L	E	S
A	L	T	E	R	E	G	O	S	■	R	A	G	A	S
N	O	T	E	■	R	A	P	T	■	S	N	A	R	E

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11/24/07

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're very passionate about your ideas. And you're highly spirited! You're intelligent, lively, fun and witty. People enjoy your company. You have a strong drive to succeed. In particular, you like to persuade others to see your point of view. In the year ahead, you will wrap up something you've been involved with for the past nine years.

Birthdate of: Katherine Heigl, actress; Arundhati Roy, author/activist; William F. Buckley Jr., publisher/commentator.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Avoid important decisions about shared property, insurance matters, inheritances, estates, taxes and debt. There's a strong chance you either have incorrect information or have insufficient data. Beware!

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Conversations with partners and close friends easily can go sideways today. That's because confusion and misunderstandings are rampant. Make no assumptions about anything.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Double-check everything at work today. Similarly, double-check anything related to your health, especially if you're taking medication. It's very easy to make an error!

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Romantic relationships are definitely confusing today. Rather than face an ugly confrontation, people are tempted to hide or lie. Don't force any issues.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Your domestic scene is confused and perhaps even cluttered today. If a family member disappoints you, don't make a big deal about anything. Relax.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): You might feel confused today because it's almost as if too much information is getting through. Your normal buffer or filter is not in place. (That's why you're daydreaming.)

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): This is a very poor day for business and commerce because deception and confusion could cost you money. Be careful with all financial transactions, including shopping.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Be prepared for misunderstandings today. Be extra clear in any communication with others. Don't take anything at face value. Don't assume that others know what they're talking about. (As you know, they frequently don't, and this is likely one of those days!)

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): This is a classic day for daydreaming and wool-gathering. Don't worry if your efficiency goes down the drain. All communication is a bit fuzzy today.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): A friend might not be completely truthful today. Perhaps this person is avoiding something or perhaps he or she is making a false assumption about something. Be alert to this.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Tread carefully during conversations with bosses, parents and VIPs today. Both parties could be confused about something. And possibly, both parties are not entirely truthful.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Your idealism is aroused today. You want to save the world before bedtime. But do you have the correct facts about what concerns you? Quite possibly, you don't. Therefore, think before you speak.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis SudoKu By Dave Green

					5	2		
	6		1			3		7
3								
		2	8		9			
	8			1			7	
			3		4	1		
								8
2		9			7		5	
		7	6					

Difficulty Level ★★★★

11/24

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HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

5	8	4	6	1	9	2	7	3
1	7	3	5	2	4	8	9	6
2	6	9	3	8	7	1	4	5
8	4	7	1	6	3	9	5	2
3	9	5	2	4	8	7	6	1
6	2	1	9	7	5	4	3	8
4	5	8	7	3	1	6	2	9
7	3	2	8	9	6	5	1	4
9	1	6	4	5	2	3	8	7

Difficulty Level ★★★★

11/23

Hilda-Jay love team remembered

By Nestor U. Torre

KORONEL AND ILAGAN. Kept their relationship a secret.

REACTING TO OUR RECENT "Directing Stars" article, some readers have asked us to share anecdotes about directing specific stars. Happy to oblige:

When we were tapped by *Aling* Miling and *Aling* Toreng Santos to write and direct our first feature film, we got to work with established Lea Productions stars, Hilda Koronel, Dante Rivero and Jay Ilagan.

Unique combination

Hilda was still in her mid-teens, but was already the toast of the movie world because of her unique combination of exceptional beauty and precocious acting ability. She was such a precocious talent that, despite her young age, she was already being cast in lead, young-adult roles in the romantic dramas that Lea Productions was known for in the '70s.

Directing Hilda turned out to be both a pleasure and a challenge. It was a pleasure because the young actress was disciplined and hardworking—and it was a challenge because she was *too* disciplined.

As a result, her performances tended to be too studied, and we had to work together to make her relax and unbend.

We also learned that, at the time, Hilda didn't know how to cry on cue, so we shared some "crying exercises" to make it easier for her to do so.

On the more positive side, we found to our great delight that Hilda's exceptional beauty could stand the most rigorous scrutiny: In one "transformation" scene, we instructed cinematographer Steve Perez to take big close-ups of the young star's different facial features—eyes, nose, lips, etc., and her exquisite beauty passed the "test" with flying colors.

We also discovered that Hilda had another talent: She was great at "continuity"—meaning, keeping track of actors' costumes, props, poses and movements so that they would remain consistent even if shots were filmed out of sequence. So, we used Hilda as our unofficial "continuity girl" throughout the shoot, and we thanked her for that extra service.

Memorable recollection

But, our most memorable recollection of our movie with Hilda was the fact that it was during the shoot that she and her young leading man, Jay Ilagan, became (secret) sweethearts.

They had to keep their romance secret because Hilda's studio frowned on any romantic relationship for its teen princess. But, Hilda and Jay were able to fool everyone—*that's* how good they were as actors, even off-camera!

Speaking of Jay Ilagan, he was the local film industry's most talented teen actor in the '70s, and directing him was a breeze. Coming from the Ylagan family of theater and film artists, he had great genes and instinctively knew how to approach every role assigned to him.

He was also versatile, essaying very different roles (drama, comedy, musical, action) with ease and believability. Sensing this, we restricted our direction of his scenes to simple suggestions, plus a little tweaking here and there.

New discovery

Later, Jay would go from one thespic success to another, and his stellar future was exceedingly bright—until he gained weight. His plumpness prompted his mentor, Lino Brocka, to pull him out of "Tinimbang Ka Ngunit Kulang" and replace him with new discovery, Christopher de Leon. Ditto for "Maynila, Sa Mga Kuko ng Liwanag," where Jay was replaced by Bembol Roco.

Jay's loss was definitely Christopher and Bembol's gain. But, we submit that the industry suffered a great loss when Jay's stellar career lost its luster, because it was deprived of his exceptional and versatile talent. Christopher and Bembol have their merits, but Jay was unique unto himself. When comes such another?

Fusion…

From page G1

In Manhattan, Giselle runs into world-weary but swoon-worthy single father, divorce lawyer Robert Philip (Patrick Dempsey), and his precocious 6-year-old daughter, Morgan (Rachel Covey)—who's only too happy to welcome the cheery, doe-eyed stranger into their household.

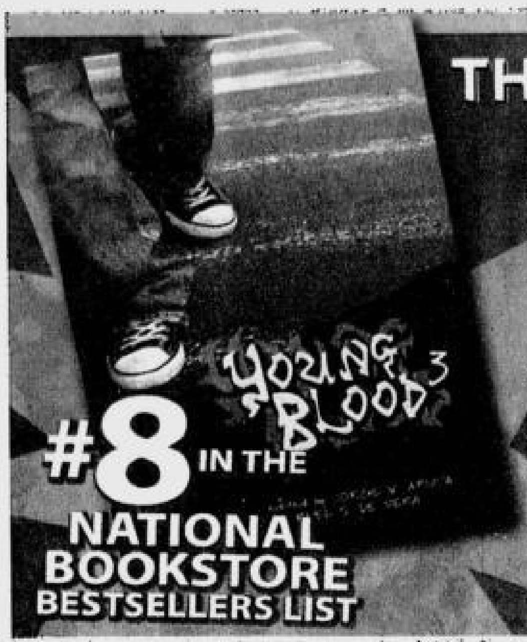
The lovable tyke has motives other than kindness, though: She wants to dissuade her father from popping the big question to his girlfriend, Nancy Tremaine (Idina Menzel)! But, romantic love's confounding complexities and contrivances are the least of Giselle's worries—especially after the wicked queen decides to the finish dirty job herself!

In a film season replete with satisfying but darkly brooding dramas and political thrillers, Lima's enchanting movie comes as a breath of fresh air. Narrated by the adorable Julie Andrews, Disney's latest rom-com seamlessly fuses animation and live action, and peppers its fast-paced exposition with toe-tapping song-and-dance routines, winsome performances—and a good dose of light-hearted cinematic whimsy.

At the core of the movie is the superb Amy Adams, who won an Oscar Best Supporting Actress nomination last year and a Special Jury Prize at the Sundance film fest for her outstanding performance in 2005's little-seen "Junebug."

Giving Adams more than adequate support are two dashing actors with hard-to-scoff-at acting chops—the dreamy Dempsey and the multitalented Marsden, who also shows off his soothing baritone in tunes created for the movie by Alan Menken and Stephen Schwartz. Take note, too, of Carrie Underwood and Jon Mclaughlin's inspiring rendition of the songs, "Ever Ever After" and "So Close," respectively.

There's much to enjoy in the film—from the insects and animals that come to Cinderella's rescue when they hear her call for help (through heavenly singing) to the engaging story's simple but relatable moral: Things don't always work out the way we want them to, but "happily ever afters" and storybook endings can also happen even in the real world—if we work and pray hard enough for them!



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YOUNGBLOOD 3

Edited by Jorge V. Aruta and Ruel S. De Vera

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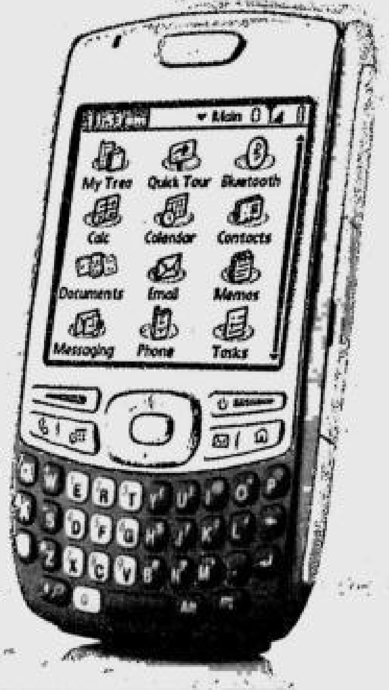

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Marian Rivera merely passes muster as Marimar

By Nestor U. Torre

THE TELEVISION WORLD IS ALL agog over the runaway success of the localized version of "Marimar" on GMA-7. Some industry hands believe that it has even eclipsed the blockbuster showing of the original "Marimar," starring Thalia.

What accounts for the new series' exceptional ratings, which peaked at something like 47, and is now still around the 40 level? *That's* a very high figure in a field where a rating in the high 20s indicates success, and 30-plus means a big hit.

Anticipation

No doubt about it, viewers doted on the "old" "Marimar," so the new series' recognition, anticipation and curiosity levels are high. Local TV buffs wanted more of the twice-told story's naive yet fun-loving and sexy female protagonist, *and* they were curious about how the local version's plotting would diverge from the original storyline.

Most of all, they wanted to see if the *Pinay* Marimar, Marian Rivera, could hold a candle to Thalia's spicy portrayal. Would she be a pale or TH copy, or would she bring something new and uniquely her own to the already pop-iconic character?

We've been watching "Marimar" regularly to find out the answers to those questions. But, before we share our notes, we must observe that the new series' consistently high ratings indicate that many viewers enjoy watching the show—and you can't argue with that.

Now, for our hopefully objective observations: The new "Marimar" has more plot twists and turns than the original, quite in keeping with Filipino viewers' preference for "eventful" (convoluted) storytelling.

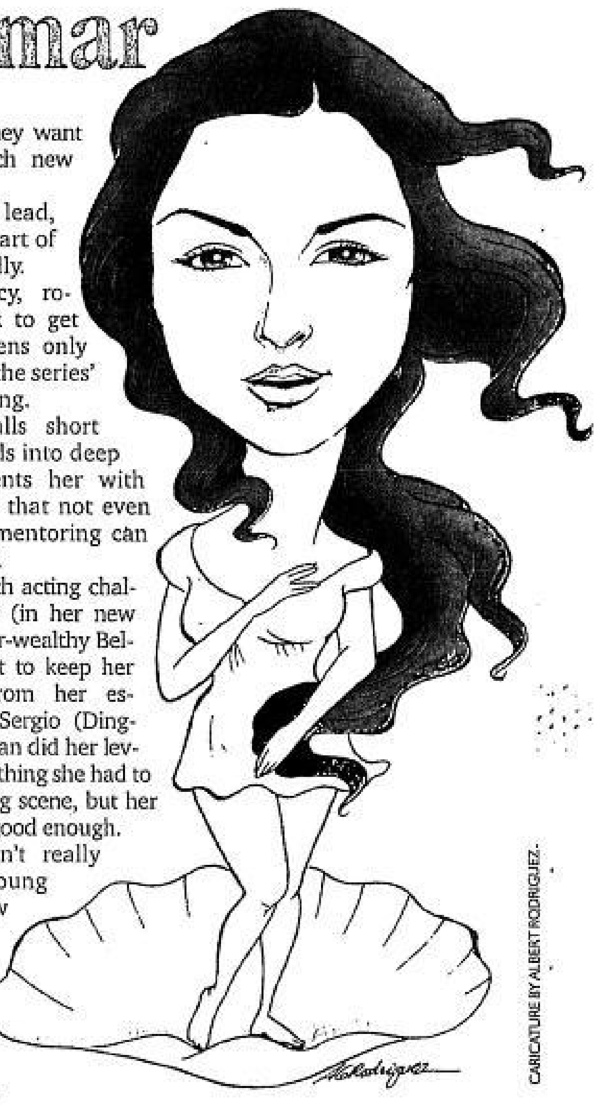
Thus, Marimar is given more challenging and confounding highs and lows than ever, and it is this "roller-coaster" plotting that keeps viewers viewing, because they want to know what each new "chapter" will bring.

As for its female lead, Marian looks the part of Marimar—physically. She's lovely, saucy, romantic—but quick to get hurt, which happens only too often to her in the series' extended storytelling.

But, Marian falls short when the show sails into deep waters and presents her with thespic challenges that not even the most careful mentoring can help her surmount.

Recently, one such acting challenge required her (in her new identity as the super-wealthy Bella Aldama) to fight to keep her daughter away from her estranged husband, Sergio (Dingdong Dantes). Marian did her level best to give everything she had to the truly demanding scene, but her best simply wasn't good enough.

Perhaps this isn't really her "fault." As a young and relatively new actress, she can't be expected to handle challenging scenes with the emotional power and thespic insight they require.


CARICATURE BY ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

RIVERA. Too inexperienced to handle truly challenging scenes.

Demanding

Thank goodness, most other scenes in "Marimar" aren't quite as demanding, so Marian generally passes muster. But, it must be noted that one of the new series' weakest elements is the fact that Marimar's "transformation" into Bella has been so lackadaisically executed.

Except for some makeup and costume changes, Bella still looks like Marimar, so characters in the story who can't see this must be blind or utterly clueless. —And, there goes the believability that this key transformation must have for viewers to really get involved in the drama.

Another major weak element is the series' poor choice of female antagonist, with the key role going to Katrina Halili, who's too young, callow and shallow to do justice to the role.

Katrina's youth and relative inexperience rob her vital role of the power, wiliness and evil that the series needs to make Marimar's travails believable, empathetic and truly heart-tugging.

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'Idol' discoveries top American Music Awards

LOS ANGELES—"AMERICAN IDOL" alumni came out on top at the American Music Awards as Daughtry, the band fronted by ex-"Idol" loser, Chris Daughtry, shared the triple-winner spotlight with "Idol" champ, Carrie Underwood.

Daughtry capitalized on its three nominations to win Favorite Pop-Rock Album for its self-titled debut, as well as Breakthrough Artist and Adult Contemporary Artist honors. "I want to thank the fans—you guys made this possible!," the band's frontman beamed.

Chance

Backstage, he explained that he was an artist even before he joined "American Idol." "The show didn't make me who I am," he explained. "It just gave me the chance to show everybody who I was."

UNDERWOOD (LEFT) AND DAUGHTRY. Won three trophies each. AP/ REUTERS

Underwood matched her three wins at the Country Music Awards early this month with three trophies: Female Country Artist, Country Album for "Some Hearts," and the T-Mobile Text-In Award.

Justin Timberlake was a long-distance winner, accepting by video from Australia, as his name was called for Male Pop-Rock Artist and in the Soul/R&B Album category for "FutureSex/LoveSounds."

Usher presented the International Artist Award to Beyoncé, who was a featured performer, but she did not win in any of her three competitive nominations. She gushed: "I'm so blessed to wake up every morning and do what I love. I don't take it for granted!"

Double winner

In the rap-hip-hop categories, T.I. was a double winner as Rap-Hip-hop Male Artist and for the Rap Album, "T.I. vs. T.I.P." Bone Thugs-N-Harmony was Favorite Rap-Hip-hop Group.

Rascal Flatts was named Top Country Duo or Group, Tim McGraw was Top Male Country Artist, Akon won Favorite Male Soul/Rhythm & Blues Artist and Rihanna bested former "Idol," Fantasia, to win Favorite Female Soul/R&B Artist.

The show was packed with performances, including Beyoncé joining Sugarland in a countryfied version of Beyonce's hit, "Irreplaceable." Backstage, Sugarland's Jennifer Nettles said she was nervous to sing with Beyoncé, whom she described as "so beautiful."

Celine Dion performed her new song, "Taking Chances," and Lenny Kravitz sat at the piano to play his latest, "I'll Be Waiting." Duran Duran performed its new song, "Falling Down," as well as the old hit, "Hungry Like the Wolf."

Debut album

Fergie opened the show with a trio of songs from her debut album, then closed it by beating Beyoncé and

'IDOL'/ H3

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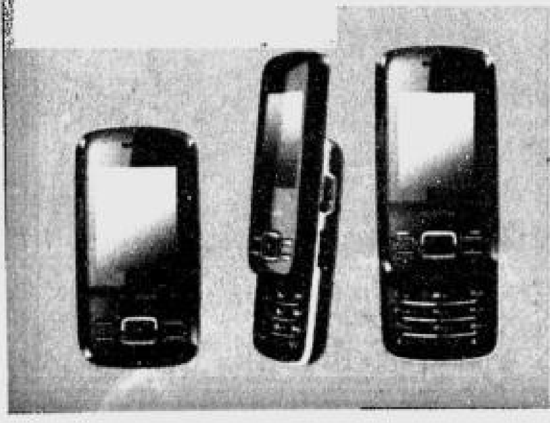

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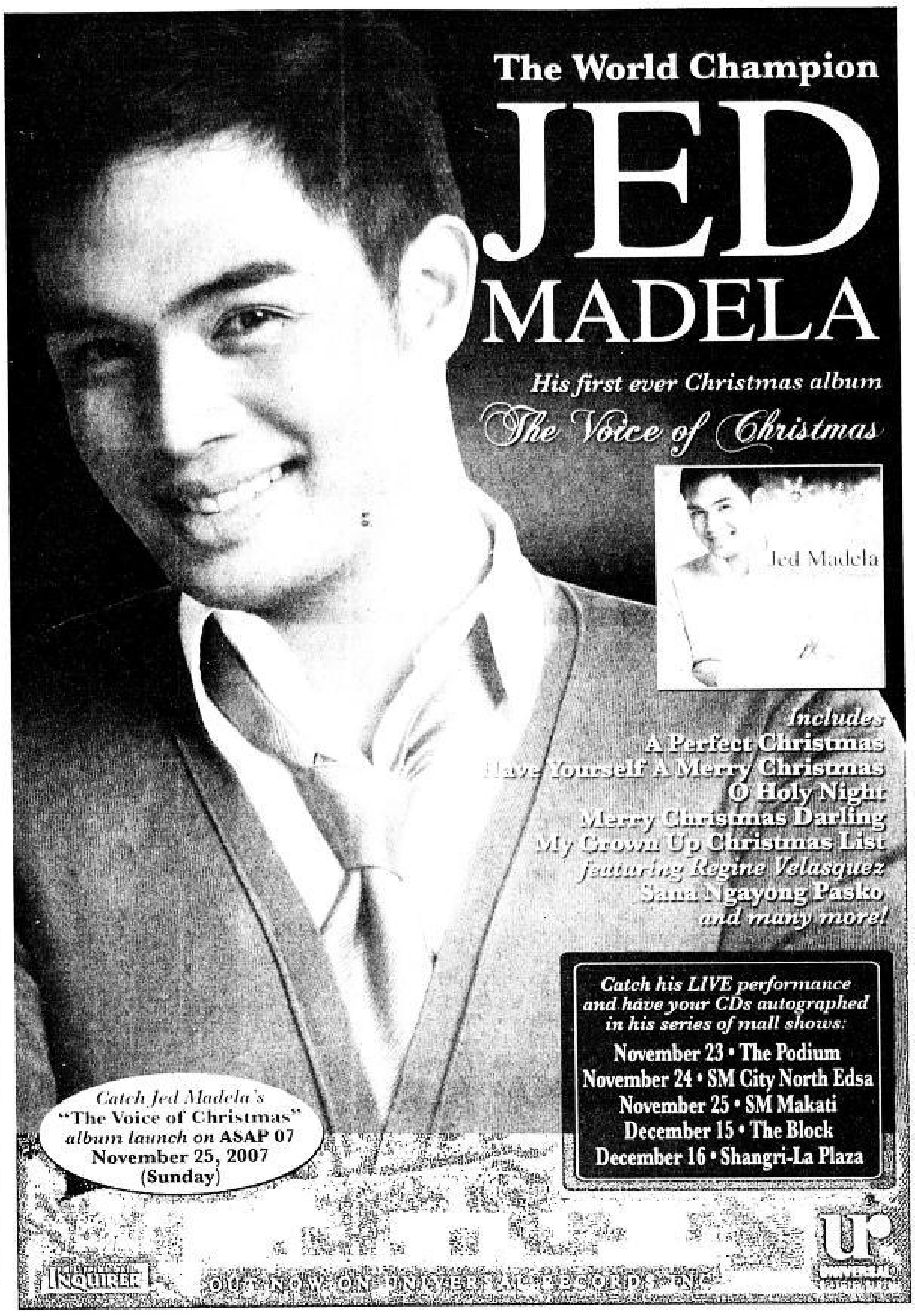

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	2	THE KINGDOM
	3 THX	BEOWULF GUARANTEED SEATS
	4	SUPER BAD
	5	THE GAME PLAN
	6	ONE MORE CHANCE
	7	THE NANNY DIARIES
GREENBELT 1	1	ONE MORE CHANCE
	2	BEOWULF
GREENBELT 3	1 THX	THE KINGDOM GUARANTEED SEATS
	2 THX	BEOWULF GUARANTEED SEATS
	3	FRED CLAUS GUARANTEED SEATS
	4	SUPER BAD GUARANTEED SEATS
	5	THE NANNY DIARIES GUARANTEED SEATS
ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX	BEOWULF
	2	THE NANNY DIARIES
	3	THE KINGDOM
	4	SUPER BAD
	5	FRED CLAUS
AYALA CENTER CEBU	1	BEOWULF
	2	SUPER BAD
	3	ONE MORE CHANCE
	4	BALLS OF FURY
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ALABANG TOWN CENTER	Seussical The Musical November 23 to 25; 11am, 3pm & 6pm; Activity Center
AYALA CENTER CEBU	Metrobank Car Event November 24 to 25; Activity Center, Paseos and Rotunda Area
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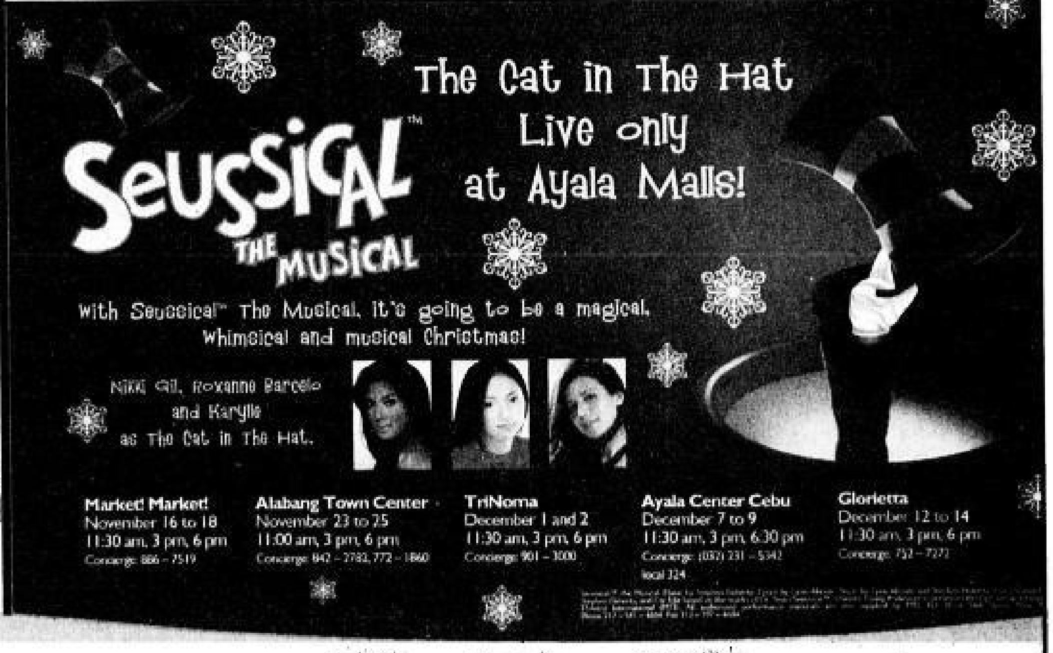

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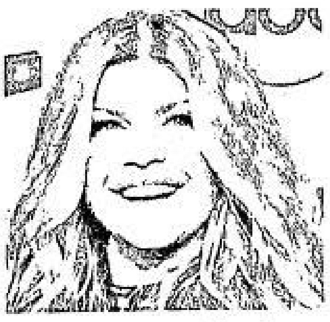

FERGIE. Her triumph is a dream come true.

'Idol' discoveries. . .

• From page H1

Avril Lavigne to win Pop-Rock Female Artist. "I was a little girl with big dreams. Tonight, one of those big dreams came true!," Fergie shared backstage.

Other performers included Mary J. Blige, Maroon 5, Rihanna, Rascal Flatts and teen stars, the Jonas Brothers. Another teen sensation, "High School Musical 2," won Favorite Soundtrack Album.

Reruns

After two weeks of writers' strike-imposed reruns of his late-night talk show, Jimmy Kimmel returned to live TV as host of the three-hour ceremony, broadcast live on ABC from the new Nokia Theater in downtown Los Angeles.

The show's basic script was written before the strike began last week, but there were no writers to provide Kimmel his trademark quips about current events.

One comedy bit came straight from September. Kid Rock spoofed his fistfight with rocker, Tommy Lee, at MTV's Video Music Awards, telling Kimmel, "You're in my seat!," before pretending to punch the host in the face.

Kimmel said the Writers Guild of America strike prevented him from writing any jokes for the show. "It may not look like it, but I'm striking right now in my heart," he jested, apologizing to the crowd for having to tolerate "made-up crap."

Still, Kimmel managed a few zingers, including an introduction of Snoop Dogg as "one of America's most beloved—and arrested—hip-hop stars." He also thanked the "Promises rehab facility for letting so many of our stars out for tonight's program."

35th year

Now on its 35th year, the American Music Awards honor pop-rock, country, soul-rhythm & blues, rap/hip-hop, Latin, alternative, soundtrack, adult contemporary and contemporary inspirational music.

Nominees were selected based on national sales and radio play. For the first time in the show's history, winners were chosen by public votes cast online. *AP*

Blood and mayhem in lackluster actioner

By Noelani Torre

SOMEDAY, PERHAPS, A MIRACLE WILL happen and there will be an adapted-from-a-video game-movie that will actually be critically-acclaimed. But, it's not happening today, and that miraculous movie is certainly not "Hitman."

Based on the popular Eidos video game of the same name, "Hitman" is the latest release in the video game-to-movie genre, and the only acclaim it will probably get is from die-hard fans—and even they will no doubt enjoy themselves more if they play the game itself.

That being said, let it also be known that the movie isn't a complete write-off. To be sure, it doesn't enrich the art of filmmaking, but it will give those who are willing to turn their brains off some enjoyment.

Spectacle

Makers of movies adapted from video games aren't really in it for the artistry, but for the spectacle (not to mention the chance to be part of what could be a lucrative franchise). The film has enough bullets, blood and braless babes to satisfy adolescents and the adolescent-minded.

Like all movies of this sort, a compelling central character is a necessary part of the formula, and this action flick doesn't fail to provide us with one. Known simply as 47 (Timothy Olyphant from "Live Free or Die Hard") he's bald as a cue-ball, has a barcode tattooed on the back of his head, and dresses nattily in a sharp black suit with a startlingly red tie.

As you can guess from the title, he's a hitman—one who never misses his target. He is amazingly athletic and is purportedly the best in the field. (Aren't they always?) Fans of the game will be glad to know that, as in the game, 47 has a host of other weapons aside from silencer-equipped guns, and these include short swords, a wire, his own bare hands, etc.

In the film's opening sequence—a series of flashbacks accompanied by the strains of "Ave Maria"—we are made to understand that 47 was trained from boyhood to be a hired killer by a bunch of what look like Roman Catholic monks. (Why monks would have an assassin-training school is something the movie doesn't bother to

BLOOD/ H4

OLYPHANT. Plays a sharpshooting assassin in "Hitman."

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MTRCB GP
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2:45 5:10, 7:35, 10:00

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2:00, 4:40, 7:20, 10:00

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MTRCB PG-13
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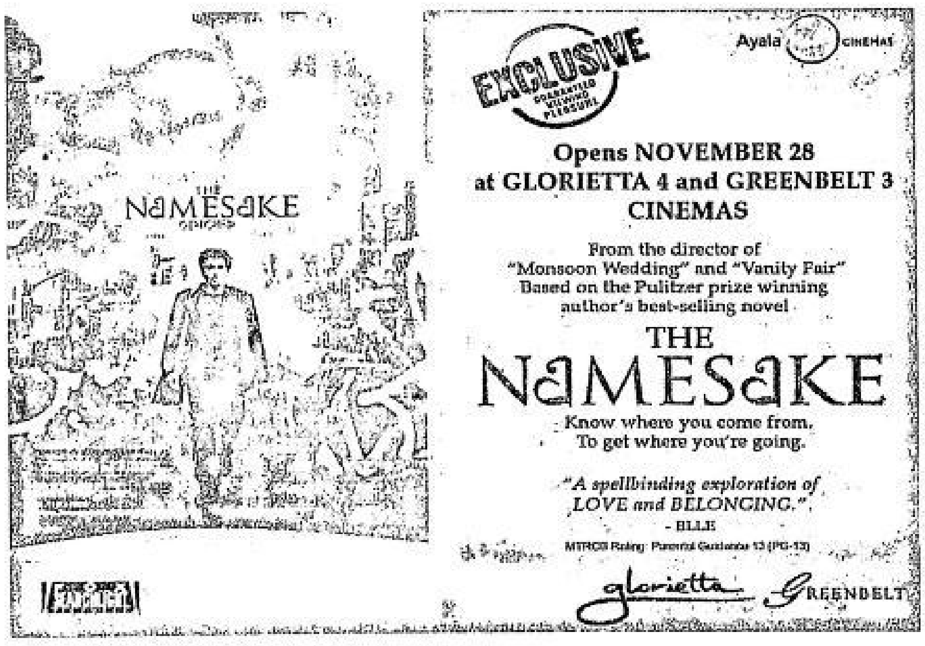

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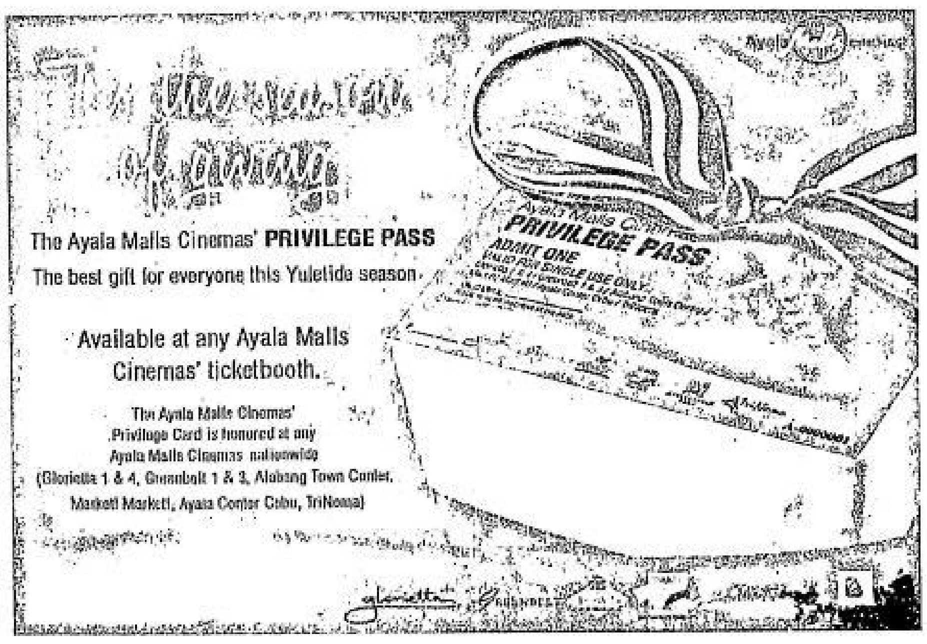

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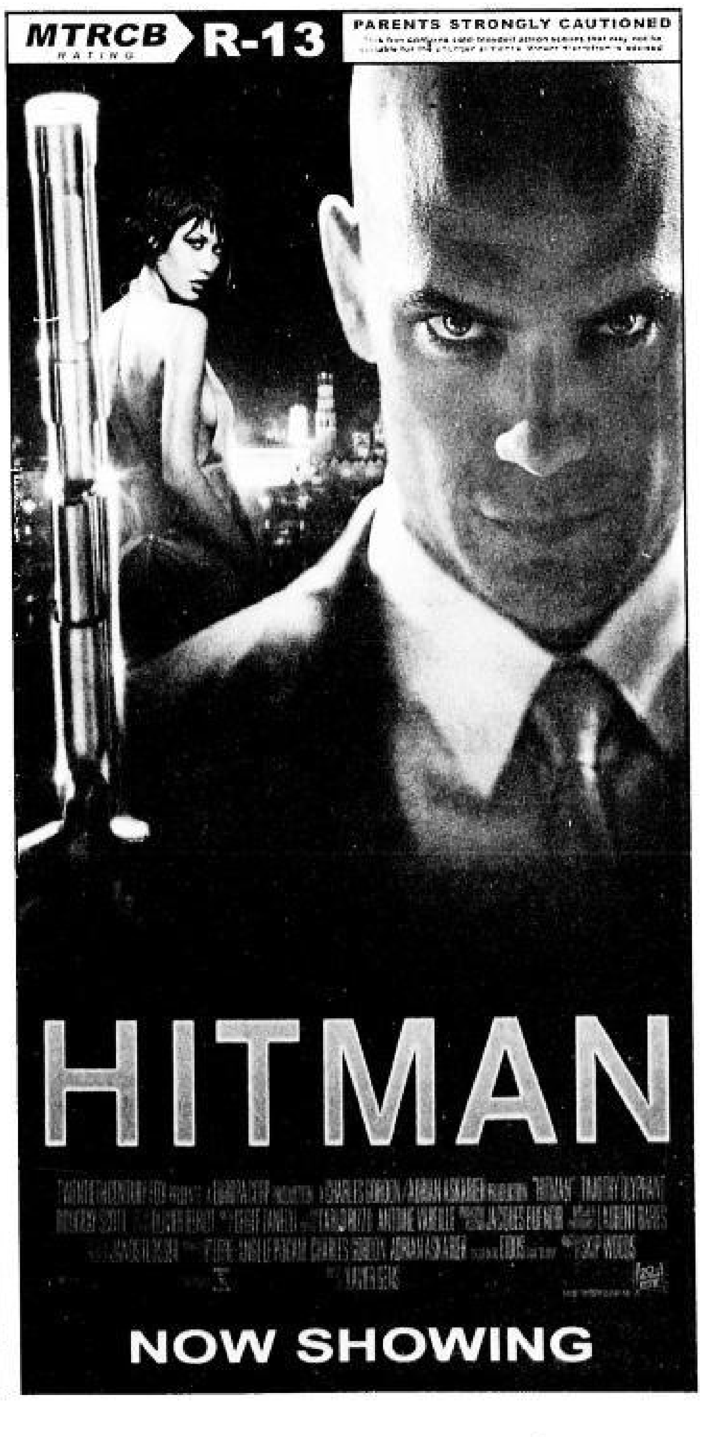

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Lorna Tolentino marks 38th year in show biz with OFW film

By Remy M. Umerez

TOLENTINO. Wants to go the indie route.

LORNA TOLENTINO CLAIMS THAT EVEN after the 92 movies she has appeared in, she has yet to repeat a role. The actress has been acting for the past 38 years, but she looks forward to many more fruitful years in the acting business.

She has been handled by the best directors in the country—Lino Brocka ("Maging Akin Ka Lamang"), Ishmael Bernal ("Pinulot Ka Lang sa Lupa"), Eddie Garcia ("Abakada, Ina"), Marilou Diaz-Abaya ("Moral"), Joel Lamangan ("Mano Po 2"), Romy Suzara ("Mga Uod at Rosas"), Fernando Poe Jr., ("Mediavillo," when she was only 10 years old), Jose Javier Reyes ("Luksong Tinik") and Chito Roño, who gave her an acting Grand Slam for the movie, "Narito ang Puso Ko."

Comedies

Lorna has appeared in only two comedies: The first one, "Pusong Mamon," featured Albert Martinez and Eric Quizon as gay lovers. The second movie is the forthcoming MMFF entry, "Katas ng Saudi." The film marks her first pairing with Jinggoy Estrada in the role of an OFW who returns home after 10 years of working in the Middle East.

The actress describes "Katas ng Saudi" as meaningful and timely, because more and more Filipinos are seeking jobs abroad. She explains: "The issues we tackle are real and easy to relate to."

Lorna will celebrate her birthday a few days before Christmas. Any particular wish this year? She replies: "I'm now fulfilled as an actress. My wish is for this movie to be a commercial success. *Sayang ang pagpapagod naming lahat para pagandahin ang pelikula kung hindi tatangkilikin ng tao.*"

She still wants to win an award, but is raring for a different kind of challenge. She explains: "What the indie film, 'Kubrador,' did for Gina Pareño, *'yon ang gusto kong maranasan.* Having a film shown at film competitions abroad and being recognized for your performance in it—that would surely complete my artistic satisfaction!"

Durability

The award-winning actress wants to emulate Gloria Romero for her durability. But, her biggest wish is for St. Peregrine, patron saint of cancer patients, to answer her prayers for the health of her husband, Rudy Fernandez, who has shown considerable improvement since the couple visited St. Peregrine's shrine in San Juan Capistrano in LA.

She shares: "I promised St. Peregrine we would return to Capistrano when Rudy and I celebrate our 25th wedding anniversary in 2010. We plan to renew our marriage vows there!"

Pope Paul VI's visit to RP recalled

By Lilia Borlongan-Alvarez

POPE PAUI VI. First pontiff to visit the country.

BEFORE POPE JOHN PAUL II WAS elected to the pontificate in 1978, there was Paul VI, the first pope to have set foot on Philippine soil—from Nov. 27 to 29, 1970. He was also the first Vicar of Christ to have visited six continents, thus earning for him the appellation, the Pilgrim Pope.

Like John Paul II's trips to the country in 1981 and 1995, the historic pastoral visit of Paul VI was a big event for Filipino Catholics: Newspapers carried banner stories on his visit, while radio stations gave blow-by-blow accounts of the event.

Assassination attempt

The first day was a hectic one for the pontiff. For starters, shortly after his plane touched down at the Manila International Airport, the pope survived an assassination attempt by a Bolivian painter. He was unfazed by the incident.

Following a tour of Nayong Pilipino, he was brought to a liturgical reception at the Manila Cathedral. Then, he blessed the image of our Lady, the Nuestra Señora de Guia, the oldest venerated Marian image in the country, which is enshrined in Ermita.

On his second day, he visited the pontifical University of Santo Tomas, where he addressed some 400,000 students. There, he called on the youth to "strike a balanced harmony of constructive criticism and generous self-giving."

This was followed by a concelebrated mass at Rizal Park attended by Asian cardinals. The event was highlighted by the first communion of some 187 boys and girls from all over Asia.

He celebrated his third mass on Nov. 29 at the Quezon Memorial Circle. Later, he was driven to the newly-inaugurated Radio Veritas, where he broadcast his message to the members of the press. He thanked them and acknowledged their role as "agents of social communication."

Encyclical

Pope Paul VI, best known for his encyclical, "Humane Vitae," which reaffirmed the Catholic Church's traditional opposition to artificial birth control methods, went out to the streets in a motorcade on his way to a low-cost housing project for the poor in Pasig, then to the slums of Tondo.

On that particular visit, he also met with an impoverished couple and their eight young children. He then visited the Apostolic Nunciature in Manila, where he addressed groups that included non-Christians, Jews, delegates from Vietnam and Taiwan, and the diplomatic corps.

Everywhere the pope went, there were multitudes of people screaming, crying, waving papal flags, or shouting "Mabuhay" and "Viva, Il Papa!" Indeed, his visit on the 405th year of the country's Christianization reminded Christians of their responsibility to serve Christ and His Church.

Blood and mayhem . . .

From page H3

explain.) This is supposed to explain the soullessness of his character, who performs his tasks with robotic efficiency.

Still, this is a movie, after all, and the audience is supposed to root for the hero, so they give him a chance to exhibit human feelings by presenting him with a damsel in distress—a leggy Russian sex-slave (former model Olga Kurylenko), who's supposedly a witness he has to kill. Instead, he ends up protecting her!

Plot

The plot is a mess, and that's putting it mildly. When you strip it to its bare bones, you end up with something like this: 47 gets double-crossed after completing another political assassination, so he has to kill a bunch of people before they kill him and the girl!

This gives French director Xavier Gens the opportunity to go all out with the blood and mayhem, which he does, though the action scenes don't have the urgency of, say, the films in the "Bourne" franchise.

Olyphant, who could actually be good given better material, does his best, but all Kurylenko has to do is look sexy, which she does. Dougray Scott also makes an appearance as the beleaguered Interpol detective on the trail of our mysterious assassin.

"Hitman" is hardly the best action film you'll see, but at least, it moves at a fast clip, so you won't have time to take it seriously.

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Law, Caine represent two generations of British actors

LOS ANGELES—IN THE FRENZY of the Toronto International Film Festival last month, we didn't get the chance to report about our interviews with Jude Law and Michael Caine, who represent two generations of Britain's fine actors.

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They are linked by the unique coincidence that, in two movies, Jude reprised key roles originally created by Michael—"Alfie" and "Sleuth." Caine also appears in the latter, but in the role first played by acting legend, Sir Laurence Olivier.

"I don't have an original bone in my body," Jude joked about remaking Michael's movies. In "Sleuth," Caine plays a millionaire detective bristling at the fact that an unemployed actor, played by Law, ran off with his wife, so he engages his young rival in a twisted and dangerous game.

Competition

Director Kenneth Branagh said in a separate press con: "There's a tennis match played throughout the film that we use as a metaphor. Watching Jude and Michael is like watching a competition between two great tennis players."

The older actor, thanks to his incredibly long and impressive career—had a lot of interesting anecdotes, which he shares in the following excerpts from our separate interviews with Law and Caine.

With Michael Caine:

Whom do you admire among the new generation of English actors?

Jude was wonderful in "The Talented Mr. Ripley"—that's how I wound up with him. I wouldn't have made "Sleuth" if he had been a bad actor. James McAvoy, who's in "Atonement," is also very good. He'll go places. And, Keira Knightley, who's now a *bona fide* star.

How competitive are you?

A long time ago, someone very famous had a tremendous effect on me. He wrote, "Never compete with your predecessors or contemporaries—compete with yourself!"

So, I appear to be completely uncompetitive, but I'm actually competing with my most terrifying competitor—myself. That's what I've been doing all my life.

That quote helps you when you sit there and lose the Academy Award time after time, as I have done *(laughter)*. I kept thinking, "He's not my competition, my competition is me! I've got to be better next time." That helps.

Are you talking about your Best Actor nominations?

Yes. I have been nominated for Best Actor four times and never won. I've been nominated for Best Supporting Actor twice and won both times.

Most fearful moment

What has been your most fearful moment?

Very early in my life, I was a soldier in Korea. I got into a situation where I knew I was going to die, but it didn't happen. There were four of us on patrol, and each of us accepted death. Then, it became all right to face death. —That's an extraordinary thing to learn when you're only 19.

You and Jude are competing for the same woman in the movie. Your character can't let go. Do you relate to that?

I never let go of any woman *(laughter)*. But, I've not had a lot of practice, because I've been married to the same woman (Shakira Baksh, a Miss Universe runner-up) for 34 years. You can't take her away from me with an iron bar!

The only way I could relate to that would be to imagine if someone tried to take my wife away. They would be in a great deal of trouble, I assure you. I'd strangle the bugger *(laughter)*!

Tell us about working with Laurence Olivier in the original "Sleuth."

I was not yet a friend of Olivier's on the other movie. I'd never met him, and he was already a Lord then. He sent me a note saying, "You may be wondering how to address me because of my title *(laughter)*."

Actually, I hadn't been wondering *(laughter)*. He said, "Once we meet, you must always and forever call me Larry," which I did. After the movie was released, I still used to have dinner with him. We became friends. We were such opposites that we attracted each other.

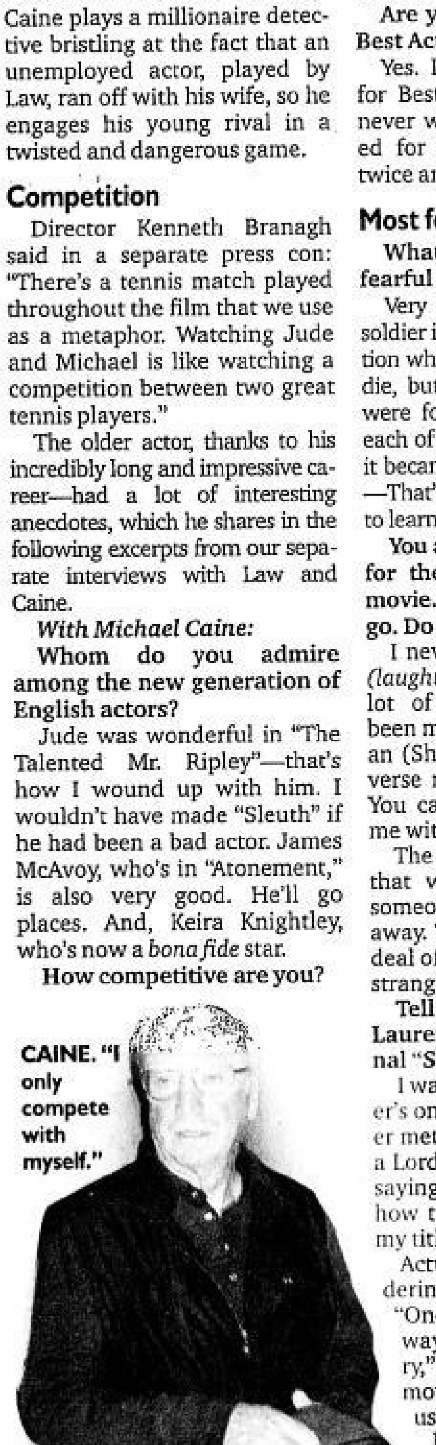
I remember I had a television in my dressing room. I was watching Wimbledon. He was walking past my room one day. He came in and said, "You've always had television? Don't you study your part in this room?" I said, "No, I study it before I get here."

The idea that an actor would watch television between takes was an extraordinary thing for him. He thought I was sitting in the room, looking at my script and worrying about it. But, for me, the rehearsals are the work, the performance is the relaxation. I do the rehearsals at home.

What is your life like away from the cameras?

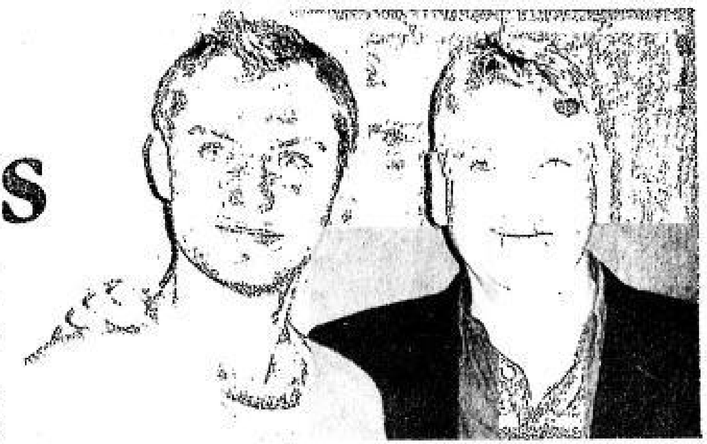
I lead a boring life. I have a wife, a family and a home that I love. I cook and garden in my own time, because I spend so

LAW/12



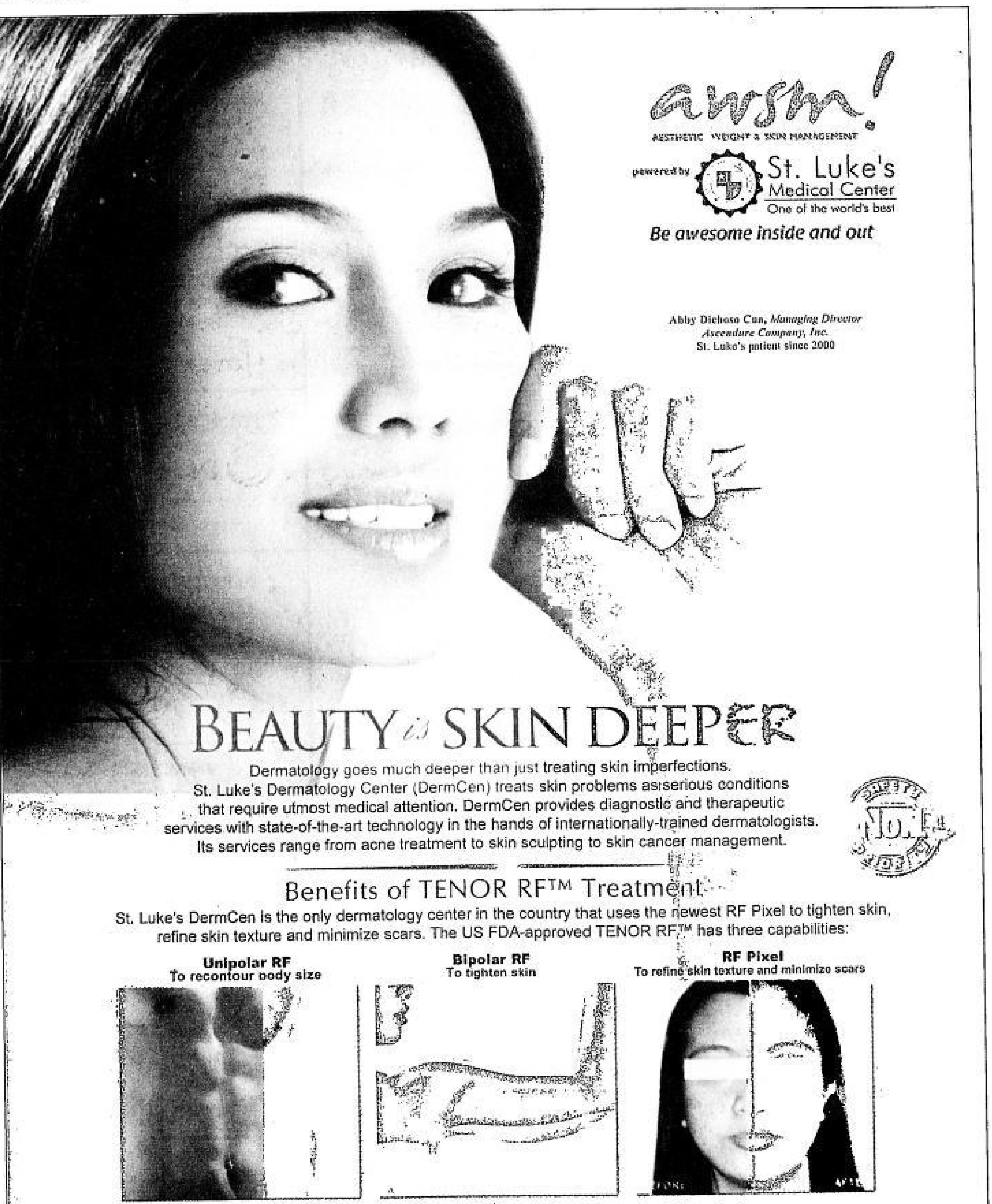
CAINE. "I only compete with myself."

RUBEN V NEPALES



LAW (WITH DIRECTOR BRANAGH, RIGHT). Looks forward to playing Hamlet onstage.

RUBEN V. NEPALES



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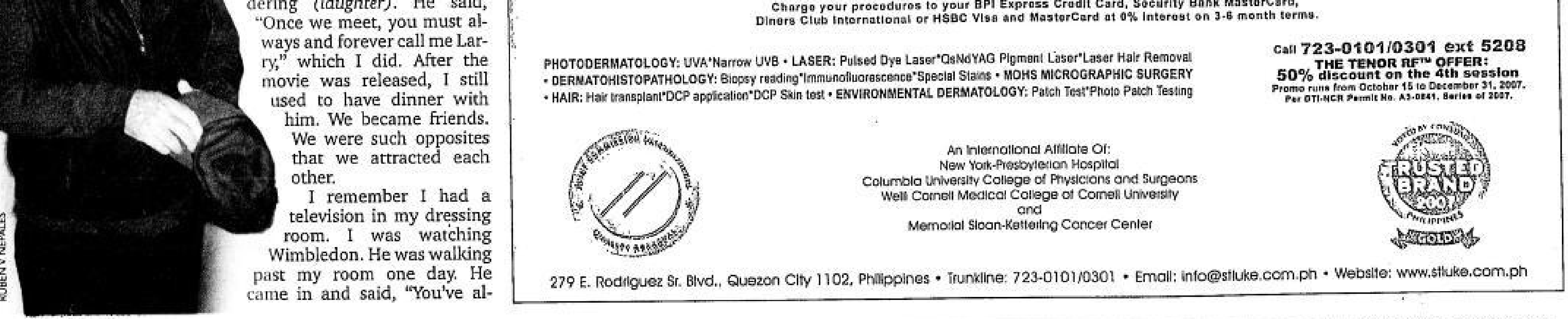

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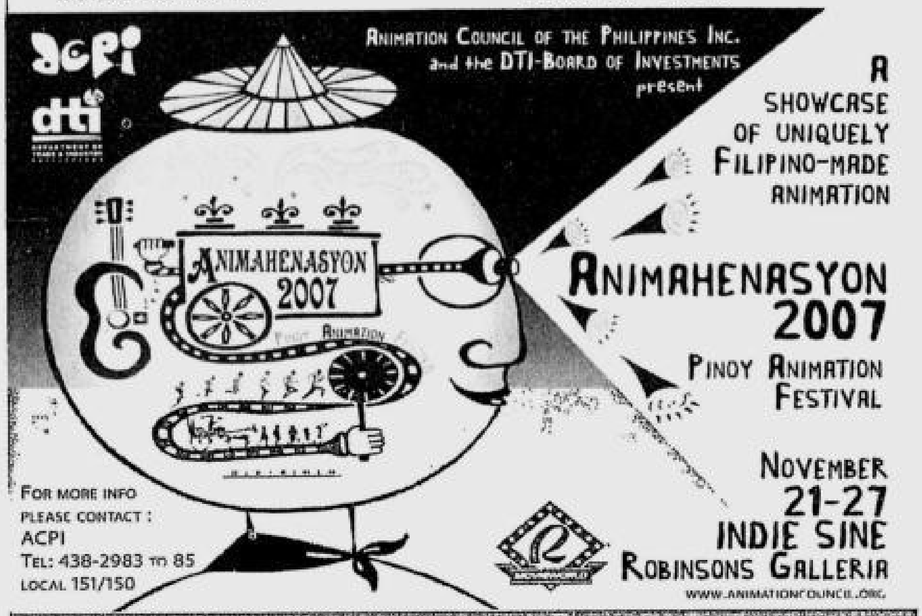

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2 ONE MORE CHANCE

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2

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Law, Caine . . .

From page I1

much time with other people. I work with 150 people 12 hours a day for months.

Grateful to God

I'm very grateful to God for what I've got, and I thank him every day. I've been very lucky, but I also notice that the harder I worked, the luckier I got *(laughter)*. I don't consider myself better than anyone else, but I don't consider myself worse than anyone else, either. I'm happy to be where I am.

You're working with Christian Bale and director Christopher Nolan in the next "Batman." What's new in that movie?

It's great for me because we're like a repertory company. I even did "The Prestige" with them. For the next "Batman" movie, the initial worry was about The Joker. Jack Nicholson was the greatest Joker. How do you top that? Well, Heath Ledger did it, and he is extraordinary! He's gone in a completely different direction from Jack.

Heath is like a very scary psychopath. In one scene, he came out of the lift to raid our place—and I forgot my line! It was incredible, he frightened the life out of me! I've never met him before. He's a lovely guy, but his Joker will be a revelation!

And what's new with your character, Alfred?

I get more familiar—and more lippy with him (Bale's Batman), and stronger. Alfred is somebody he relies on. He's sort of a father to him. I get the funny lines in the movie.

Sean Connery is one of your friends. Have you tried to convince him to return to acting?

I told him many times, but he won't budge. I know him very well. But, you can never say never!

With Jude Law:

You and Michael Caine share some roles…

There was certainly no strategy to model myself after Michael, or tick off all the parts he's played in the past—they were just pure coincidence.

Love for work

What was it like for two actors to be directed by another actor (Branagh)?

Something that bound us early on was that the three of us recognized a common love for work. We were not interested in any of the frills and distractions that came with it—we just wanted to roll up our sleeves and get on with it. Ken makes you feel like you're the only actor for the job. Michael and I joked that Ken was probably more capable of playing both our parts. *(Laughing)*

In 2009, Ken is going to direct me in "Hamlet"—that's going to be a challenge! I haven't done theater in four years, so I'm looking forward to doing that. I'm in good hands.

How would you describe Michael?

He's very happy. He's a gardener, like I am. Like me, he's also a romantic.

Can you tell us about your father (Peter Law), who supported your decision to become an actor at a young age?

My dad was a teacher and a headmaster. He was incredibly encouraging, friendly and approachable. He still is. He's one of my best friends. He's also a great granddad. He was brave enough to appreciate that his son wanted to be an actor. So, when I left school at 16, he didn't get in the way. He said, "Go for it! You can always go back to school."

Rough times

You've had some rough times in your personal life. Is now a good time?

I just bought a new house in London. It has a nice garden—which makes me very happy. What's also fulfilling is my other job as ambassador for an organization called Peace One Day, a non-political, impartial organization that recognizes the United Nations Peace Day every Sept. 21st. We went to Afghanistan to try to implement the ceasefire.

Young actors from the UK are making waves, like James McAvoy, Hugh Dancy and Charlie Cox. How do you feel about this new crop of British actors?

I'm not *that* old, and no, I don't feel any pain *(laughter)*! They're very good actors. I know Charlie and Hugh, but I don't know James very well.

E-mail rvnepales_5585@yahoo.com, and read his blog, "The Nepales Report," on www.inquirerbloggers.net/nepalesreport.

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HITMAN R13 1:15,3:30,5:45, 8:00,10:15	NANNY DIARIES G 12:00,2:00,4:00 HITMAN R13 6:15,8:30,10:40	ENCHANTED G 1:10,3:30,5:50,10:30

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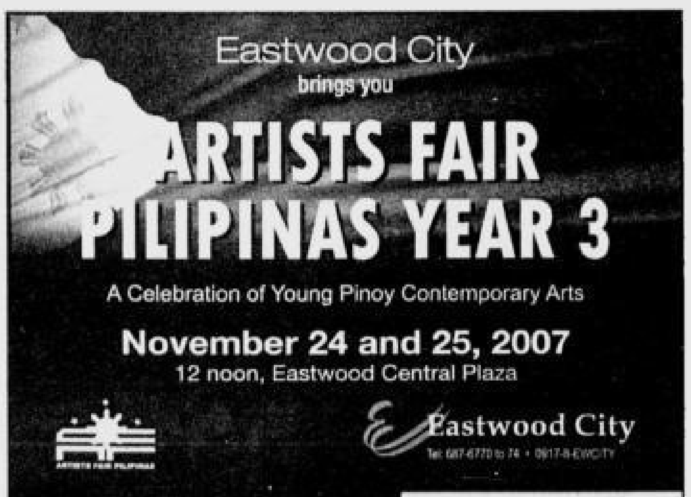

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12:30, 3:10, 5:50, 8:30, 11:10
PG-13

2 HITMAN
1:20, 3:45, 6:10, 8:35, 11:00
R-13

3 ENCHANTED
2:00, 4:50, 7:40, 10:30
PG-13

4 BEOWULF
3:10, 5:50, 8:30, 11:05
PG-13

LeAnn Rimes gets . . .

From page 14

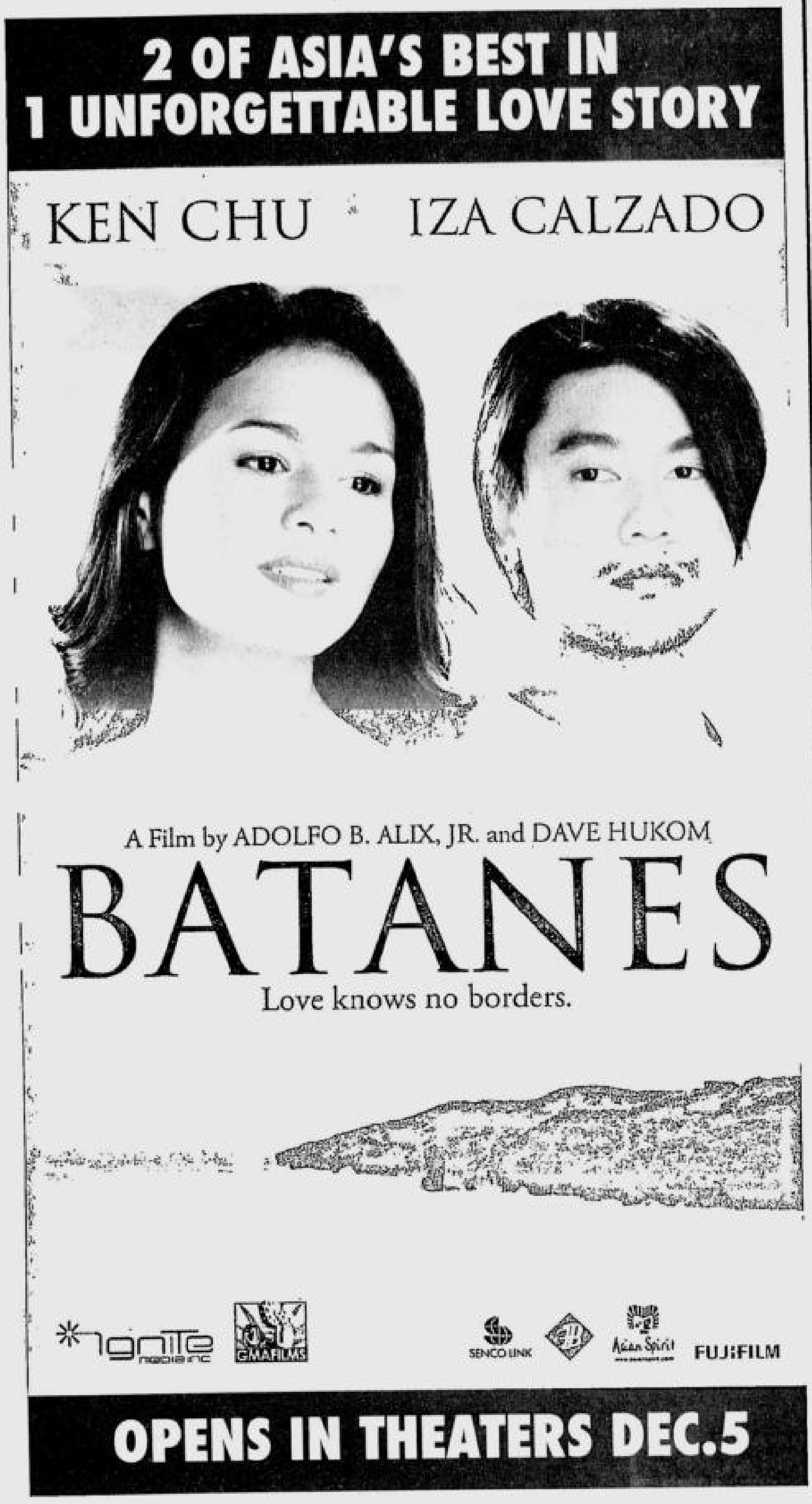
has been through ups and downs with my parents. My relationship with them was very public, and it turned into lawsuits at one point. All I wanted was for them to be just my family, not my managers—and to have that separation of business and personal life.

I have a wonderful relationship with them now. I dive into that subject matter on the title track, "Family." The song clarifies a lot of issues.

You've been in the public eye since you were 13. Did you ever feel there was a point in your life where you could have turned into a wild child?

Absolutely. I lived in LA from the time I was 15. I went to parties and hung out, so I had my wild moments. I was a teenager growing up in the business, but I had respect for myself.

Music was the most important thing to me, and I didn't want anything to overshadow that in any way. I do think my parents raised me properly. As big a battle as it was between us, I still respect them! *AP*



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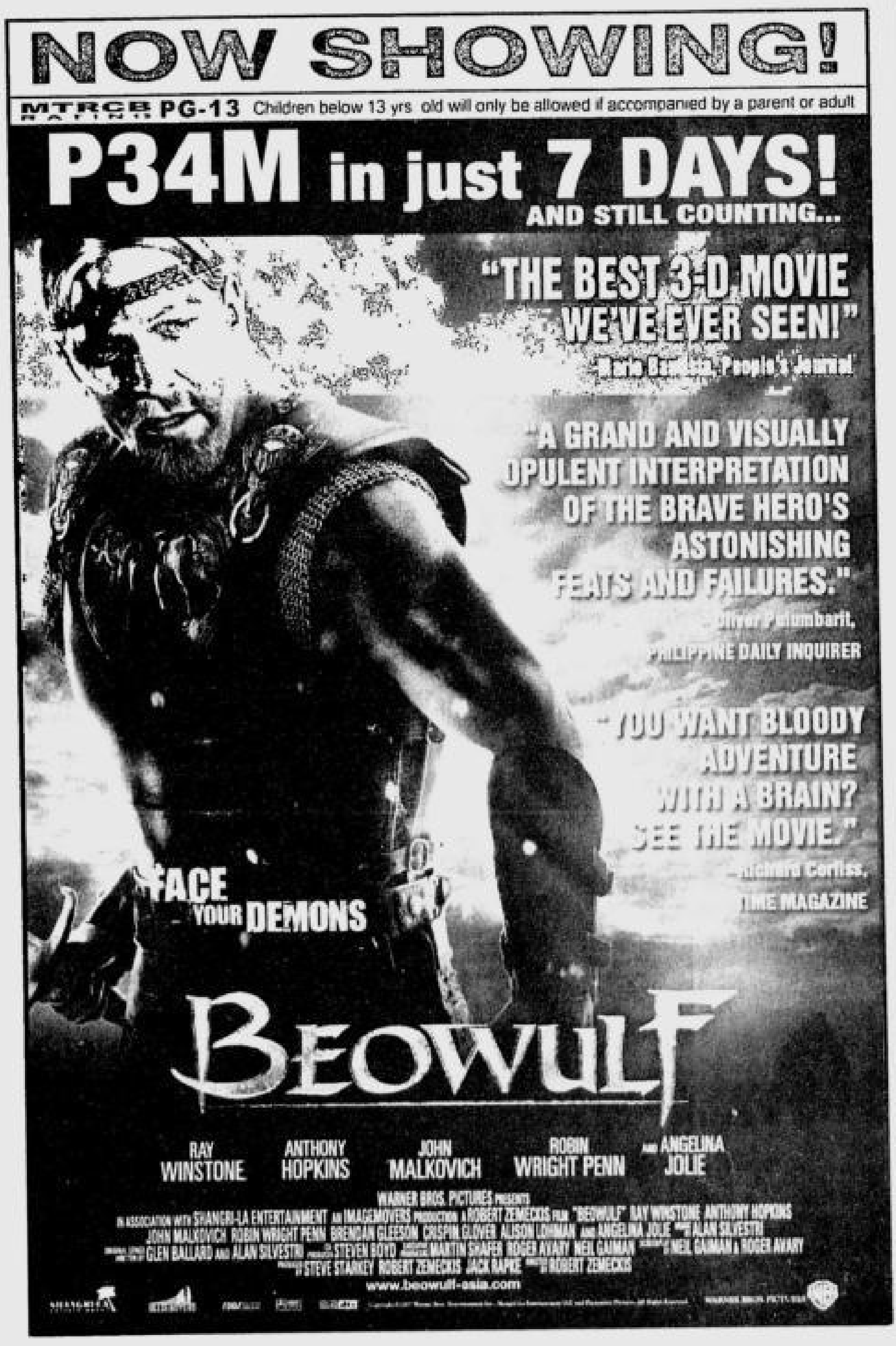

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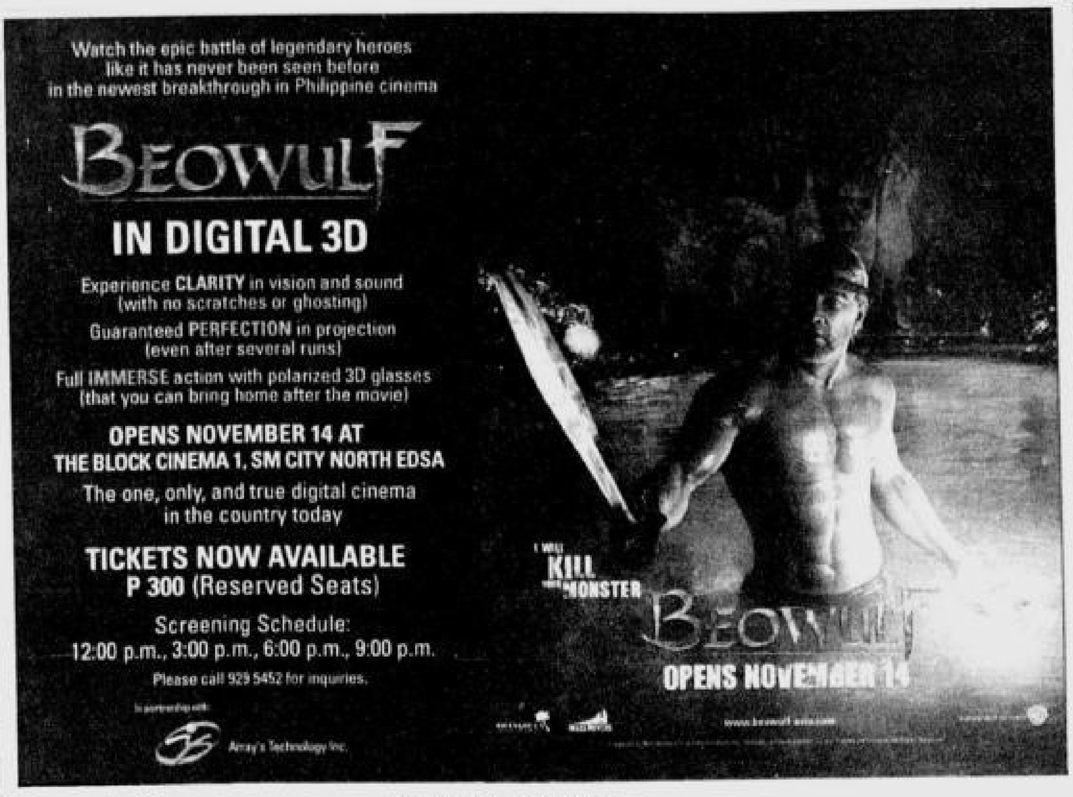

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9 BOOGEYMAN 2
10 RESERVED
11 BEOWULF
12 ONE MORE CHANCE

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4 ENCHANTED
5 LIONS FOR LAMBS
6 HITMAN
7 BOOGEYMAN 2
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9 ONE MORE CHANCE
10 ONE MORE CHANCE
11 THE GAME PLAN
12 THE NANNY DIARIES/ CARTOON NETWORK

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5 HIDE & SEEK
6 BOOGEYMAN 2
7 HITMAN
8 ONE MORE CHANCE
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10 THE GHOST SON
11 ENCHANTED
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4 ENCHANTED
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2 ONE MORE CHANCE
3 HITMAN
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3 THE NANNY DIARIES
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8 HIDE & SEEK
9 WE OWN THE NIGHT

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4 THE GAME PLAN
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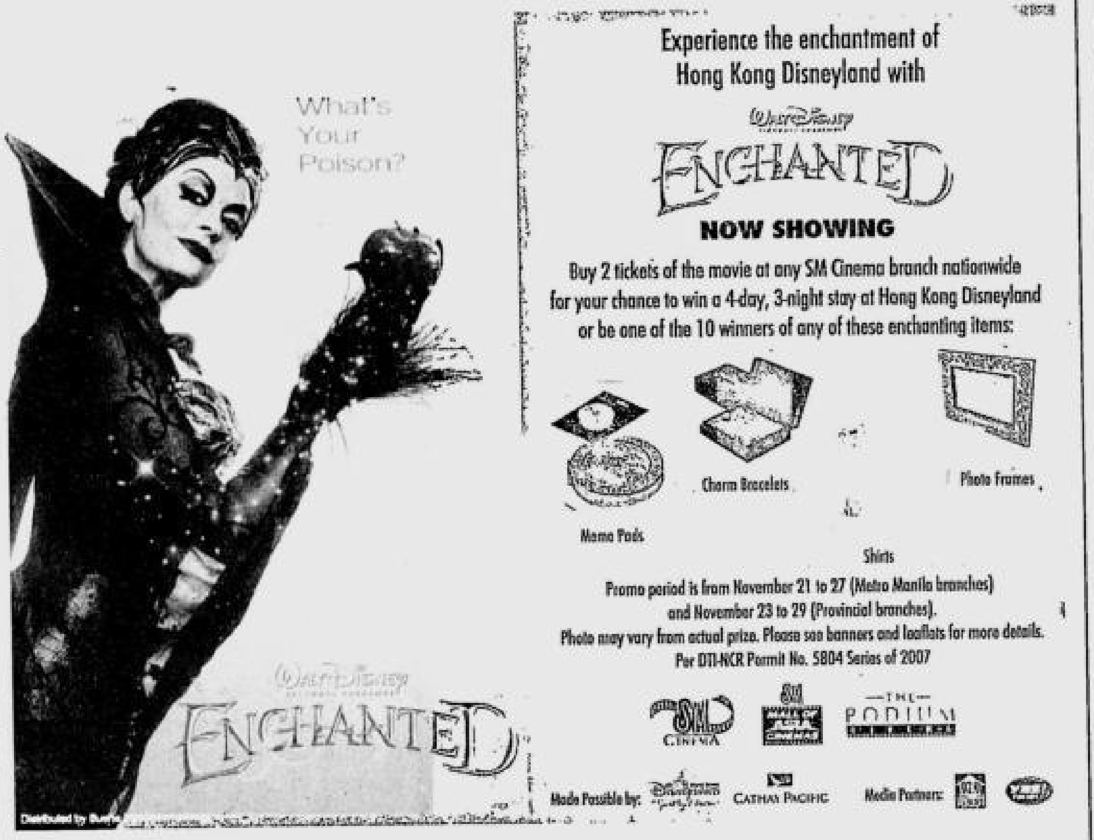

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LeAnn Rimes gets personal in 'Family'

NEW YORK—NO ONE HAS EVER denied LeAnn Rimes' talent as a singer: Her soaring voice has wowed audiences since she was only 13, when she made her debut with the hit album, "Blue," and earned a Best New Artist Grammy in the process.

But, as the years went on, she didn't get much respect for being an artist—until now: Critics are lauding Rimes for her extremely personal new album, "Family," on which she sings about the well-publicized drama she had with her parents, and about the love she has found with Dean Sheremet, her husband of six years.

RIMES. Her new album is getting her the best reviews of her career. AP

Latest project

The album marks the first time Rimes has cowritten every song on her album. She also had some help from Sheremet; who collaborated on the singer's latest project.

In a recent interview, the 25-year-old singer talked about her growth as a songwriter, the trappings of fame and, of course, family. Excerpts:

Why did you decide to write your own material?

I felt it was time because I have since fully lived my life. As a 13-year-old girl starting out in this business, I wrote songs for my album, but they were about superficial things.

This time, I felt I might as well dig into my own experiences and focus on real emotions. This is not coming from the celebrity whom people think they know. This is coming from LeAnn, the real human being—and the 25-year-old woman who has experienced so much and has a lot to say.

Feelings

Did you have any trepidation about delving into your feelings to write music for this album?

As an artist, to be emotionally available and to really tell the story when I'm singing, I have to dig into those emotions. I wear them on my sleeve. I don't hide anything, especially on this record. I was never freaked out at all about telling my story because I know I'm not the only one who feels that way.

Most critics have praised this album. Do you feel a certain validation, since you wrote most of the songs?

Usually, reviews for my albums are not positive. They like to pick on me. It's nice to be able to have your peers take into account how much work you put into your album, praise it, and pay attention for the first time.

Do you read the tabloids?

No. I try to stay as far away from them. They say the things they say to sell their magazines. I look at it from that point of view, so it doesn't affect me anymore. That's why this album is important because it allows people to get to know me better—as a woman and as a human being.

Formula

What is your formula for a happy marriage?

I don't know what the secret is, but my husband and I laugh a lot together. He travels with me. We're one of those fortunate couples who spend a lot of time together *without* killing each other.

You went through a public battle with your parents. What is your relationship with them now?

I know I'm not the only one who

LEANN/13

Star-spotting on SKYCABLE this Christmas

This Yuletide season, SkyCable presents a constellation of TV stars in their thought-provoking and highly entertaining shows guaranteed to bring holiday cheer.

Headlines from the headliners

Ace broadcast journalist Diane Sawyer reports on world issues in *Good Morning America.*

Multi-awarded broadcast journalist **Diane Sawyer** top bills the stellar cast as she delivers the world's most important issues and breaking news in **Good Morning America**, your wake-up call for the latest global happenings. Comedienne extraordinaire **Whoopi Goldberg** takes the hot seat together with a group of outspoken women in the much talked-about and often controversial talk show, **The View**, where the day's top issues are dissected in a no-holds-barred discussion. Then, let the tandem of **Ryan Seacrest** and **Juliana Rancic** fill you in on the latest scoops in Hollywood and its stars in **E! News Weekend**. And speaking of Hollywood scoop, **Courtney Cox-Arquette** returns to the small screen this time as a manipulative editor-in-chief out to get exclusive stories at all costs in the original drama series, **Dirt**. All these programs are on the Velvet preview on channel 25 and will commence regular airing in January 2008.

Not too friendly this time: Courtney Cox-Arquette returns to the small screen in Dirt.

Whoopi Goldberg speaks her mind in *The View.*

Discovering the stars

SkyCable Platinum's Discovery Travel & Living unwraps a savory treat courtesy of two well loved British culinary experts. The dashing **Jamie Oliver** gives helpful hints on cooking at home with ingredients right from your backyard in **Jamie at Home,** which airs every Thursday at 8:00 P.M. And in **Jamie's Chef,** seen every Wednesday at 9:00 A.M., the palatable discovery continues as Jamie puts four aspiring chefs to the test, sending them to the toughest restaurants in London to see who deserves to wear the toque. Meanwhile, the fiery **Nigella Lawson** spices up the holiday season in **Nigella's Christmas Kitchen** beginning December 14, Fridays, at 8:30 P.M. See the ravishing Nigella produce a myriad of dishes which relish tradition while giving tips on how to keep cooking fun amid the flurry of the holidays. On the other side of the world, the irrepressible **Kelly Osbourne** explores the bizarre and unknown society of Japan in **Kelly Osbourne: Turning Japanese,** which airs every Tuesday beginning December 4 at 10:00 P.M. Watch the youngest Osbourne throw herself into a wide range of jobs and after-work activities in this new dose of reality TV. Meanwhile; Anthony Bourdain spans the far reaches of the globe and offers his honest and often biting observations on the places he visits in season 3 of **No Reservations** premiering December 16 with episodes every Sunday at 10:00 P.M. Relish the sights, smells, sounds and tastes of unusual locales as Bourdain samples soup tulang in Singapore, joins the SWAT team in Los Angeles, milks sheep in Tuscany or eats fried intestine on a stick in Hong Kong.

Nigella Lawson spices up the holidays with cooking tips in Nigella's Christmas Kitchen.

If cooks could kill: the charismatic Jamie Oliver whets your appetite.

Join Anthony Bourdain as he takes you to a feast of global proportions in No Reservations.

Kelly Osbourne takes on odd jobs as she explores Japan in Kelly Osbourne: Turning Japanese

Velvet , SkyCable's new general entertainment channel for women, is one of the six new channels that will begin regular airing on SkyCable beginning January 1, 2008. Excited viewers can catch a sneak preview of the shows on Velvet on SkyCable Channel 25 until December 31, 2007.

Discovery Travel & Living, on the other hand, is among the multitude of channels available exclusively on the SkyCable Platinum Metro Pack, a bundle of never-before-seen channels on cable TV. To subscribe, call the Customer Service Hotline at *631-0000* or visit *www.skycable.com*.

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The Fashionable Choice

Style and substance: Giorgio Armani, one of the world's leading fashion and lifestyle design visionaries, collaborates with Samsung, an innovator in mobile phones

Premium lifestyle with the Giorgio Armani-Samsung mobile phone.

Mobile phone brand Samsung has always been at the forefront of launching the most fashionable phones in the market. Taking the mobile experience to a whole new level with its groundbreaking designs with its ultra-slim profiles and trendy technological advancements, there is no doubt that more and more tech-savvy fashionistas are switching to Samsung.

And when someone as iconic and respectable in the fashion industry as Giorgio Armani teams up with Samsung, it's undeniable that the brand has already solidified its positioning in the fashion world.

Samsung and Giorgio Armani recently announced a groundbreaking strategic alliance for the development of innovative portable and home consumer electronics products, founded on the combination of Giorgio Armani's iconic design aesthetic and Samsung's cutting edge technology.

"Today fashion has expanded to encompass our way of life, not just how we dress, but how we design our home, the hotels we stay in, the car we drive and the technology we buy," Giorgio Armani, President and Chief Executive Officer of Giorgio Armani S.p.A. says. "In fact, we make as much of a personal statement with the mobile phones that we carry or the televisions we have in our living rooms as we do with the shoes and bags we wear or the furnishings we chose to place in our homes. These are all lifestyle decisions, where design and performance are the criteria. Samsung has successfully anticipated the growing role for consumer electronics in our lives, while recognizing the importance of self-expression in the development of its products."

Apart from the Armani/Casa-Samsung luxury LCD television scheduled to be unveiled in January 2008, another product of the collaboration is the Giorgio Armani - Samsung luxury mobile phone.

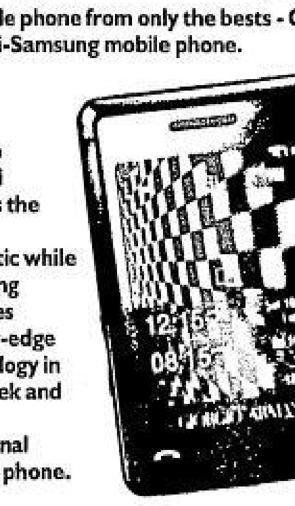
Unveiled during the Milan Women's Fashion Week at the Armani/Teatro - the day of Giorgio Armani's signature collection fashion show - the Giorgio Armani-Samsung luxury mobile is a technologically-advanced and beautifully-designed phone created for communication and to complete the ultimate lifestyle.

Only 9.9 mm in thickness, the Giorgio Armani-Samsung mobile phone is pure elegance. Not only does it have a large 2.6-inch QVGA TFT LCD screen that maximizes the user's visual experience and optimizes the full touch-screen user interface, it also has a graphical user interface and an audio user interface that reflect Giorgio Armani's modern simplicity. Of course, a specially-designed Giorgio Armani leather carrying case is also included for protection.

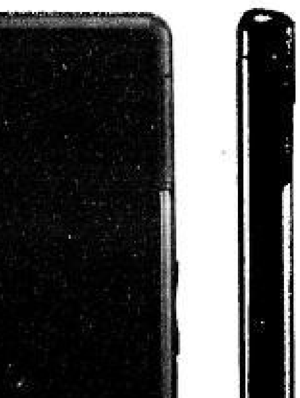
Samsung also makes sure that the luxury mobile phone is loaded with the most powerful and impressive multi-media features such as a 3-megapixel camera, a music player supporting various types of music formats and a full Internet browser. Apart from these, the Giorgio Armani-Samsung Mobile offers a microSD type external memory slot and comes with a Bluetooth(R) stereo headset.

With its incomparably beautiful design and high-tech advancements, there is no doubt that the Giorgio Armani-Samsung luxury mobile phone will quickly achieve iconic status.

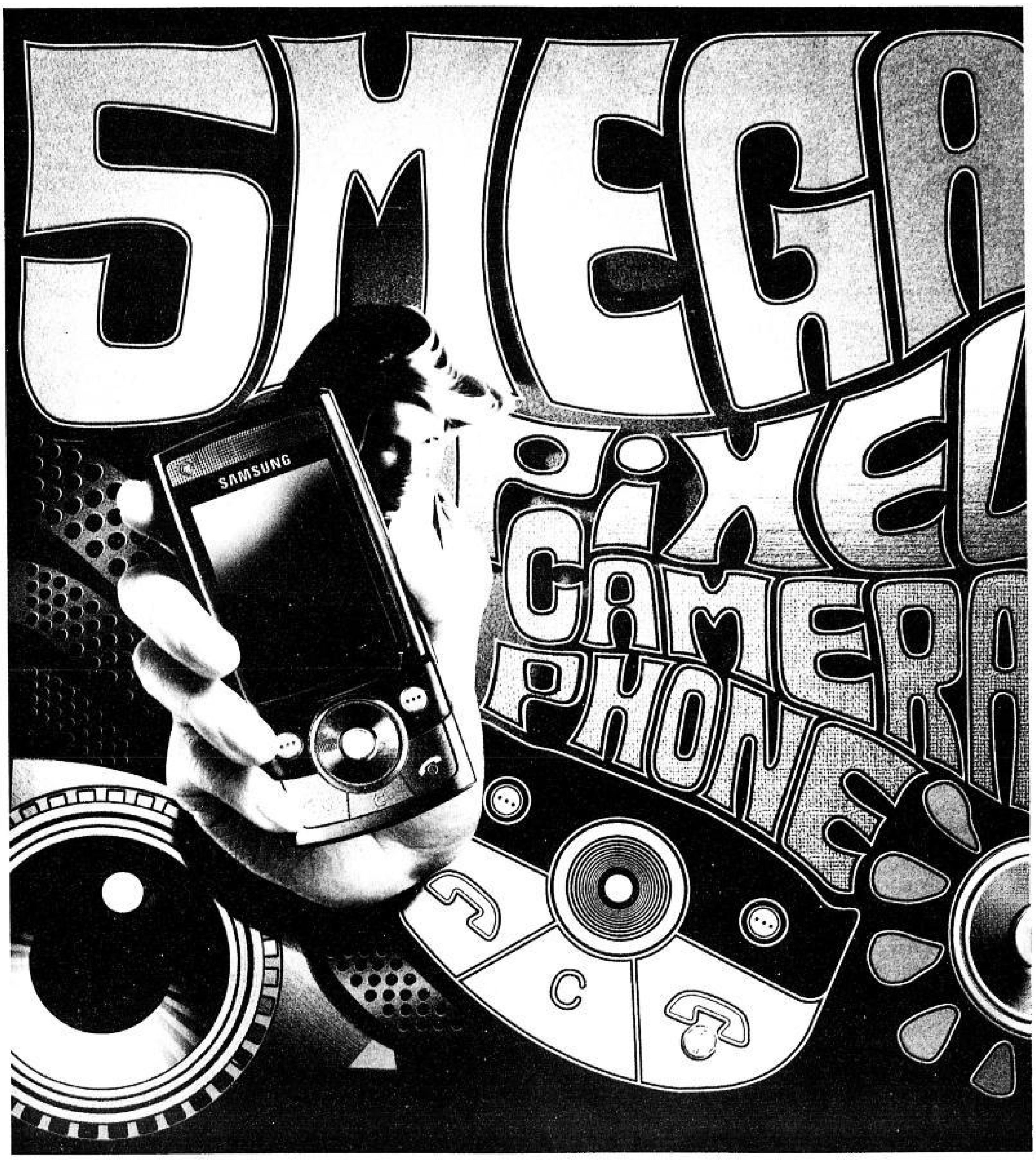
From corporate leaders who go for the brand's multi-function phones to today's discerning youth looking for phones that are both functional and flaunt-worthy, from music aficionados who go for superior sound quality and dedicated user-friendly music controls to trendsetters impressed by nothing but the best and most unique designs, more and more are undeniably turning to the better choice, Samsung Mobile.



A mobile phone from only the bests - Giorgio Armani-Samsung mobile phone.



Giorgio Armani creates the design aesthetic while Samsung provides cutting-edge technology in this sleek and multi-functional mobile phone.



G600

imagine the power of 5

Imagine the colors and images inside a new generation of camera phone. It's style and technology bursting with clarity and vibrancy, all to the power of 5 Megapixels. Could this be the next trend? With the Samsung G600, it's not that hard to imagine. ph.samsungmobile.com

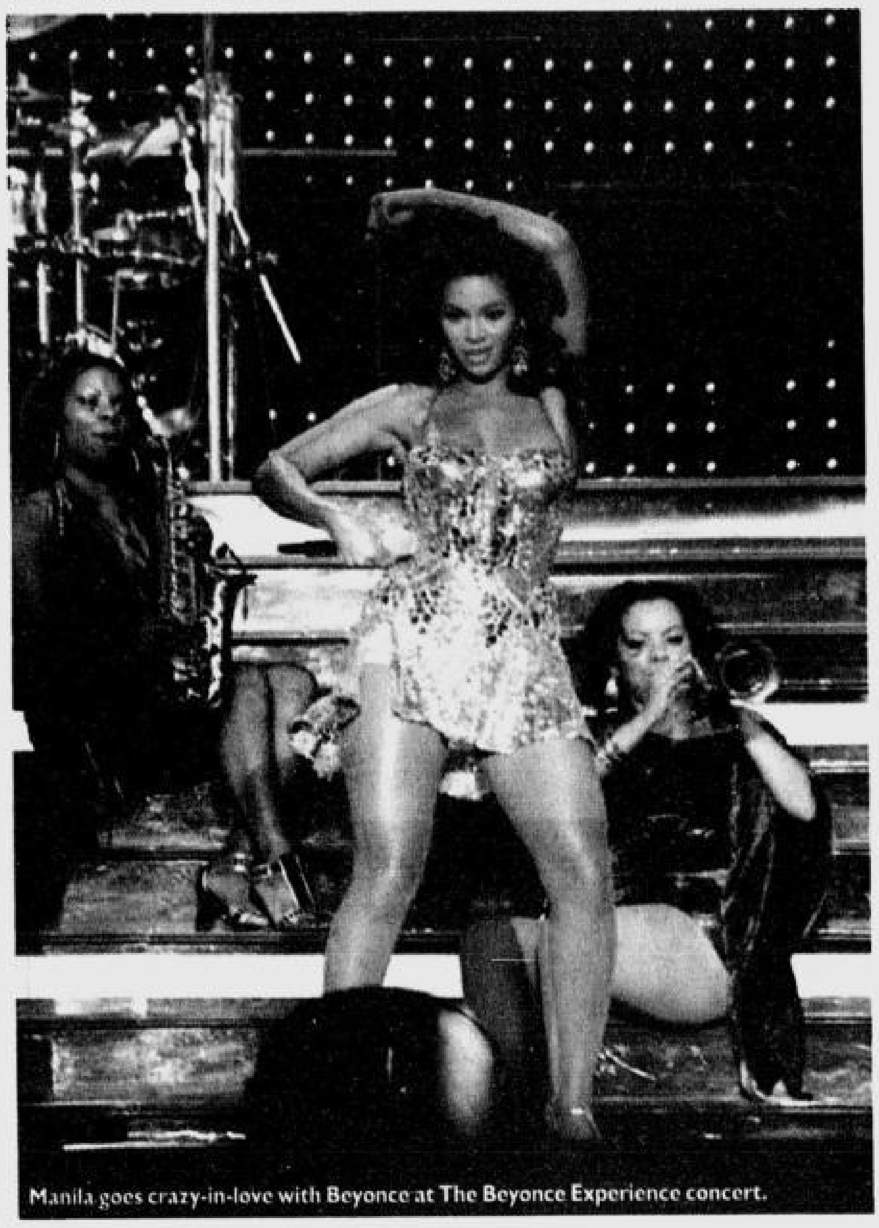
5 Megapixel Camera with AF
16 Million Color TFT Screen (QVGA, 2.2")
High Sensitivity Shot (ISO800)

TV-out Function
Bluetooth® Printing, Pictbridge
FM Radio

Samsung Electronics Philippines Corporation Ground Floor, Bonaventure Plaza, Ortigas Avenue, Greenhills, San Juan, Metro Manila
Samsung Customer Contact Center: TOLL FREE 1-800-10SAMSUNG for PLDT or 1-800-3SAMSUNG for Digitel.

SAMSUNG

Beyonce's Choice



Manila goes crazy-in-love with Beyonce at The Beyonce Experience concert.

Taguig mayor Freddie Tinga with wife Kate and children

Anne Curtis

Francine Prieto

Angela Arroyo with daughter Mikaela and Rose Montenegro

Franz and Marietta Pumaren

Rac

Samsung Mobile covers a wide range of consumer needs with the right balance of stylish designs, form factors, and the latest technological features. Beyonce is a talented individual who has shown her versatility in the entertainment world with her big moves and larger-than-life persona. The fit between Samsung Mobile and Beyonce is simply…perfect.

Charles Choi, VP President of Samsung Mobile Philippines Business,

says, "Samsung is thrilled to be working with Beyonce because we share a lot in common - both have strong passion for music, video and entertainment, and are considered icons in our respective industries. We both aspire to deliver seamless satisfaction, bring music to life"

Beyonce's recent commercial for the Samsung F300 kicked off this special partnership. Beyonce dressed in jeans jauntily saunters down a city sidewalk on a sunny day listening to music on her mobile phone, and inevitably

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SAMSUNG'S STYLE AND SUBSTANCE

A multitude of lifestyles converge in the right choice for Samsung mobile phones.

Young and vibrant as they are, today's youngsters have become very adept multitaskers. Engaging in various different activities has become a part of their active lifestyles. On the same note, entrepreneurs and professionals share a demanding day on the job that can leave them at wit's end. All believe that the touchstone of work and life is balance. The same standard applies to the mobile devices they carry; it's about finding a superior model that harmoniously blends both technology and artistry for work and play.

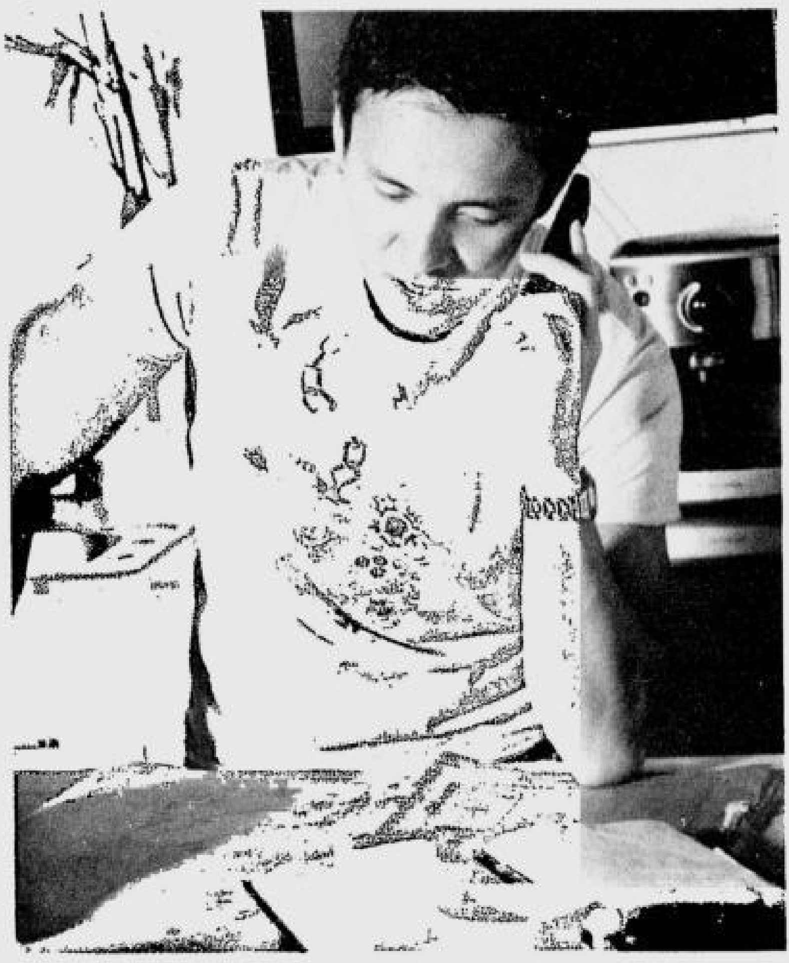
The Samsung Ultra Music F300 is a dual-face handset with a fresh, unique, and stylish design. On one side is a large, clear screen with a sweep touch key that makes music control simple, intuitive, and fun. Flip over to the other side for a Samsung mobile phone that has built its reputation on quality, functionality, and usability. The F300's right combination of stylish designs and technological features reflects in the versatility of its owners who, in turn also show versatility in their own lifestyles. The Samsung F300 is a powerful and beautiful mobile phone perfect for stylish and on-the-go music lovers like Paolo Cabalfin, Denise Laurel, Gaby dela Merced, Andi Manzano and Geoff Eigenmann.

The Samsung Ultra Messaging i600 Smartphone-with its slim, user-friendly design and innovative, cutting-edge functions-is meanwhile perfect for the young entrepreneurs. Measuring only 11.8mm and weighing a mere 105g, the Samsung i600 is the world's thinnest 3.5G smart phone with a full QWERTY keyboard. It blends the desktop functionality of the Windows Mobile 6 platform with extensive multimedia capabilities to help people work on the go, stay in touch with family and friends, or just have fun. For engineer and photographer Victor Consunji and real estate maven Divine Lee such a plethora of functions has allowed them to achieve this elusive balance in their lives.

In this day and age, consumers need a smart and fashion-savvy mobile phone that easily plugs into their life, be it for work or play. They won't settle for anything else. It's all about maintaining a sense of equilibrium in their lives, and the multi-functional Samsung i600 and dual-faced Samsung F300 help consumers strike that balance well.

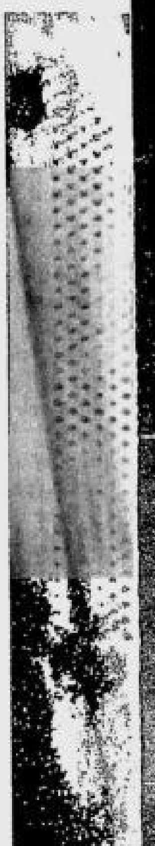
Multi-tasking becomes easy for real estate maven Divine Lee with her Samsung i600.

Samsung F300 plays young DJ and VJ Andi Manzano's favorite tunes all day and



Engineer and photographer Victor Consunji keeps his day organized with the Samsung i600.

Model and music afficionado Paolo Cabalfin is vibrant and always on the go with the Samsung F300 in hand.



Young actre
is a surefire
her Samsun

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and Phillip Gu-Unjieng

David Buenavacz and Jessica Rodriguez

helle Ann Go

Martin Nievera

All eyes on bootylicious Beyonce

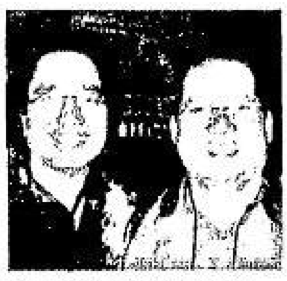
crosses paths with a smartly dressed Beyonce intently talking business on her phone. They bump inte each other recognizing one side of the other's personality as they lower themselves to pick up the phones they had dropped. As they straighten up, the phones meld into one, the dual-faced Samsung F300, and we see a sassy, jaunty Beyonce going her own way down the street, the song "Irreplaceable" playing in her ears.

And it was this same song playing in everyone's ears after The Beyonce Experience concert held at the Fort Bonifacio Open Field recently. Samsung Mobile helped bring to life this once-in-a-lifetime and truly unforgettable concert. Multi-faceted and multi-talented Beyonce Knowles worked up a shindig that made everyone stand on their feet and ready themselves for a night of booty shaking. "Crazy In Love" kicked off the Beyonce Experience. She belted out the lovesong "Dangerously in Love", grooved Destiny's Child classics such as "Say My Name" and "Bills, Bills, Bills" and inspired all the women with the hits "Independent Women" and "Me, Myself, and I". Her gyrating moves to "Naughty Girl" and "Beautiful Liar" was a true sight for sore eyes.

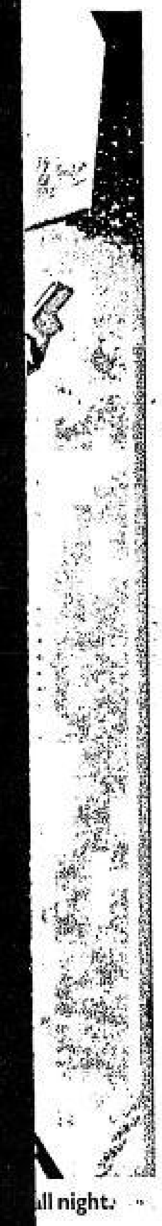
Multi-faceted and multi-talented, Beyonce Knowles have made the right choice. With Samsung, her star is sure to shine even brighter as this alignment brings the bests in music technology and talent.

Kit Zobel with children

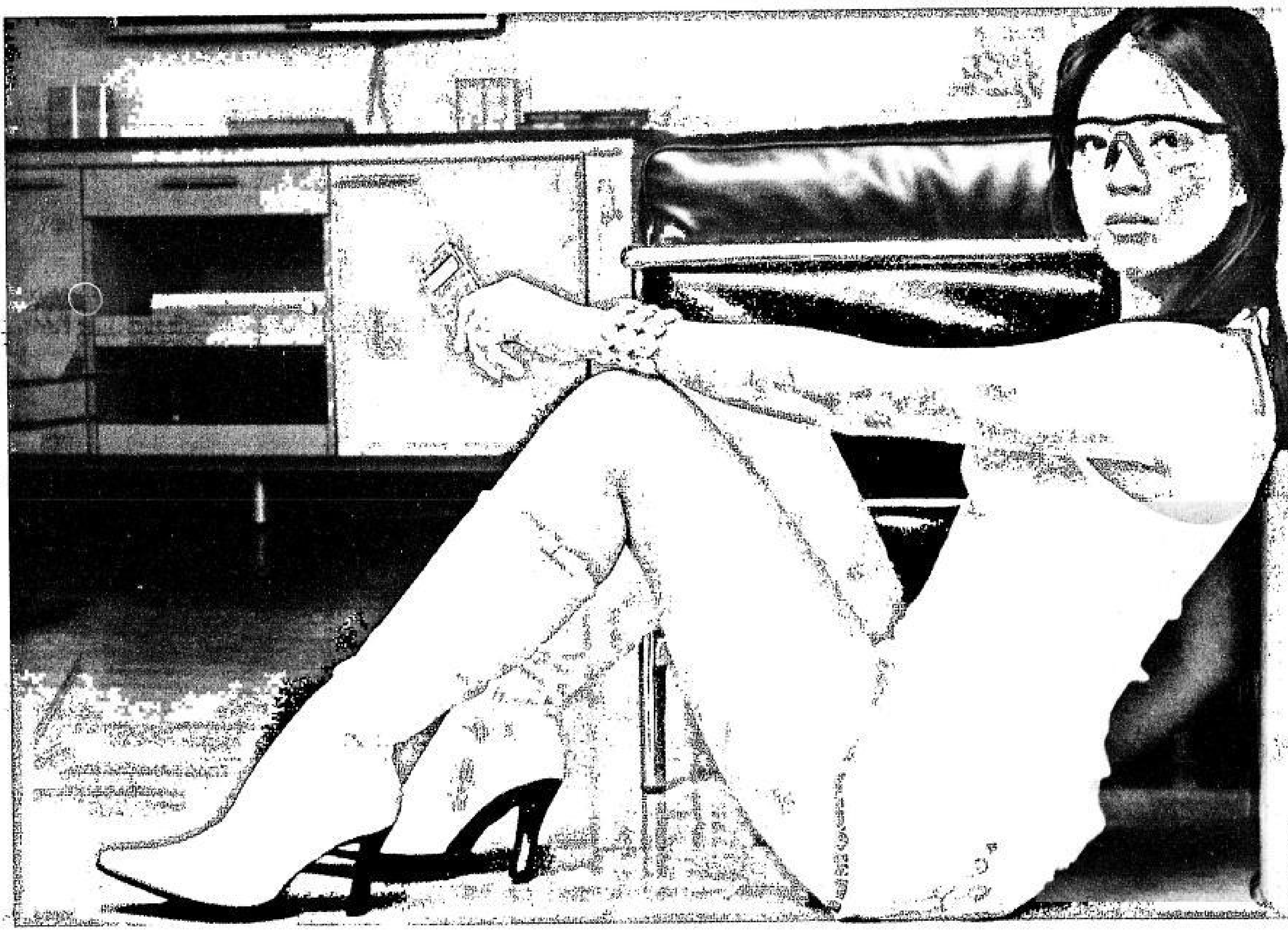
Paolo Contis and Isabel Oli



Francis Lumen and Sony BMG's Rudy Tee

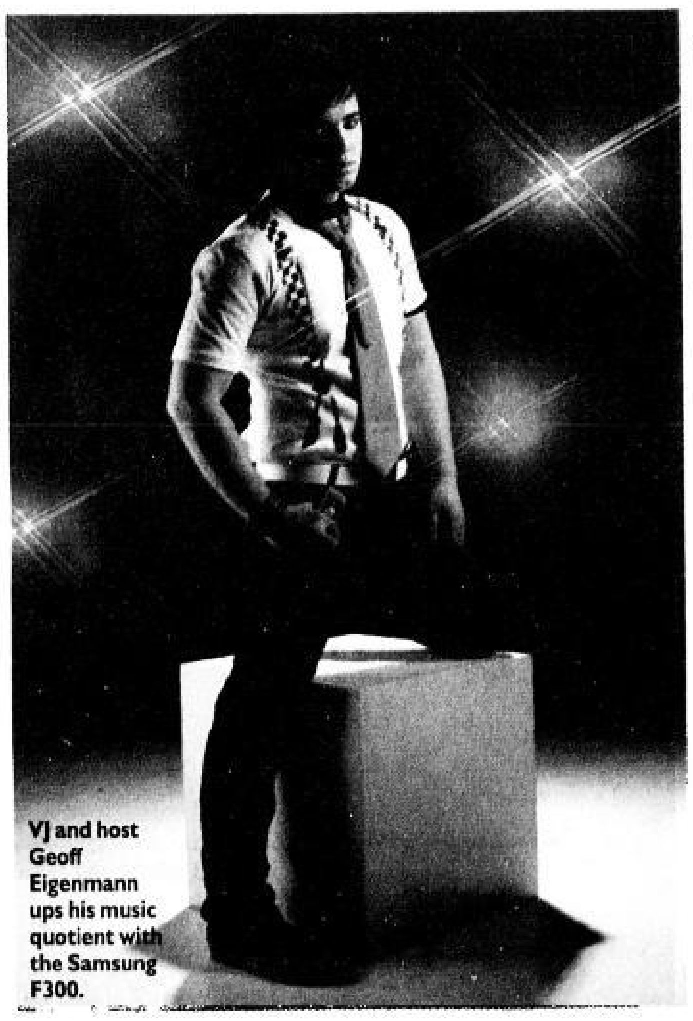


ll night.



Race car driver and host Gaby Dela Merced keeps her friends and her favorite tunes at bay with her Samsung F300.

ss Denise Laurel
head-turner with
g F300.



VJ and host Geoff Eigenmann ups his music quotient with the Samsung F300.

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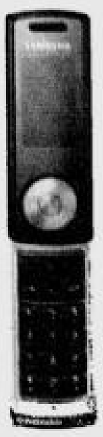
Samsung Makes A Hit

Metal finished with tempered glass surface lends flash and substance to the Samsung E840

Samsung keeps you wanting more with its range of feature-rich music phones. Choose from the unique and trendy F200 and F210 and the slim sliders F330 and E840. Take your pick between the Samsung J750 orL600.

A quick glance at Samsung F200 and you'll be enamored with its super trendy design and appeal. This tiny powerhouse of multimedia mobility measures an incredibly compressed 89.5x32.6x19.8 mm and weighs at a mere 76 grams for great portability. Flick and swivel the mobile phone and enjoy the latest multimedia applications such as Podcasting. Tune in on your favorite FM stations or let your mobile soundtrack play on the background. USB 2.0 facilitates the fastest data transfers, Bluetooth 2.0 provides faster wireless connections and WAP 2.0 connects the mobile to the internet. It features an innovative and intuitive Dual UI navigation and graphic user interface, seamless transfers with Windows Media DRM, and Offline Mode for playtime anytime, even during a flight. Add a splash of color to your music world with its Wine Red, Deep Blue, Sweet Pink and Greenish Blue variations.



Offering 100% music and 100% phone functionality, the Samsung F210 is a trendy stick that's so cool, it's hot.

Don't let the Samsung F210 fool you with its size. This tiny device offers 100% music and 100% phone functionality. It appears to be a cutting edge music player with its compact dimensions at 87.8x31x20.5mm when closed. Swivel and flick open to make a call and reveal a convenient 3x4 keypad. Enjoy the Dual UI which maximizes the use of the TFT display according to whether the user wants to listen to music or use the mobile's other features. For total music control, volume keys are located on the side and the Music Library organizes your playlist according to artist, album or genre. Auto and manual tuning for FM radio helps you find the station you want. In addition, you can be connected to a range of peripherals including wireless headsets and mobile printing.

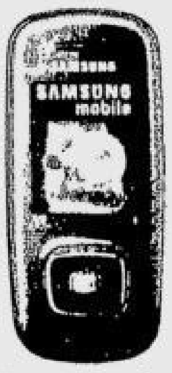
This super slim slider Samsung F330 allows you to use its mobile and music functions with its music hotkeys and ergonomic keypad design.

Versatility is exemplified in the Samsung J750 with its clean and sophisticated look.

The super slim Samsung F330 allows you to utilize the phone and music functions with its music hotkeys and the large ergonomic keypad. This compact slider has a 2.1" large display that disappears into the fully reflective glossy surface for a sleek and uncluttered look. Carry all your favorites with you from songs to photo albums to videos with its 24MB internal memory plus an external microSD memory expandable up to 4GB. Take fabulous shots with this 2MP and VGA camera and immortalize moments with its video recording function. HSDPA allows you to dowload files at speeds faster than ever. Use the USB to transfer files back and forth easily and effortlessly.

Look all you want as the Samsung E840's eye-catching glossy metal surface packed with powerful multimedia functions entice you in its beauty. This embodiment of sense and style is barely 10.6mm in depth with a Mirror LCD that reflects your best. Visualize the possibilities with its powerful 2-megapixel camera and video functions. Audiophiles will enjoy full access music player functionality with its multi-format music player and FM radio. For literally effortless media file transfers from another device, just connect and AutoSync automatically transfers newly acquired or ripped content to your handset. uMenu's active home screen allows ready access to your most frequently used functions, while uGo travels with you to capital cities and displays their landmark sites, according to night and day, with fun graphics and animation. The Samsung E840 comes in your favorite jewelry colors of Ice Silver, Candy Pink, Topaz Gold, and Noble Blue.

Enjoy full Web Browsing in Samsung J750 which allows you to have the same experience on your mobile as you would on your PC. NetFront 3.4 browser and Google Search offer powerful engines for web searches while the zoomable feature lets you magnify your view for easy reading. Its ergonomic size is easy to grip and its simple yet brilliant design appeals to those wanting a clean yet sophisticated look. Listen wirelessly with its Bluetooth's stereo headsets embedded in 8MB memory while microSD offers unlimited storage of your music files. USB 2.0 enables fast connections for file transfers as well as mobile printing options through Pictbridge. From convenience to security, the Samsung J750 offers users easy-to-use functionality as well as peace of mind with Mobile Tracker.

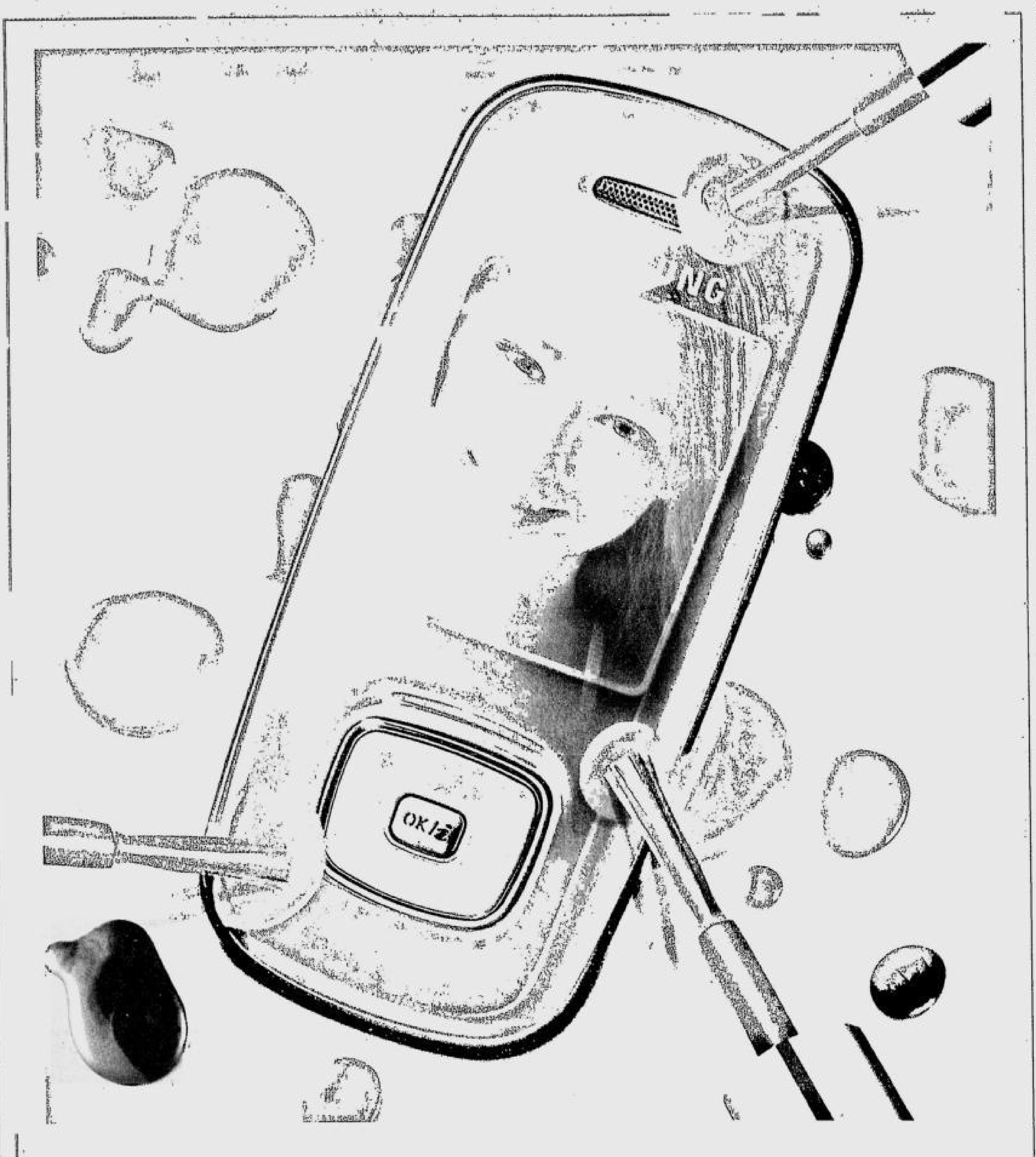


Young and trendy audiophiles will love the Samsung L700's lustrous color options: Coral Pink, Navy Blue, Lavander-Violet, and Lemon Green

The Samsung L600 is a hip mobile phone with its vivid and glossy reflective exterior surface. Its lustrous color options include Coral Pink, Navy Blue, Lavander-Violet, and Lemon Green. This slider measures only 99x44.5x17.2 which allows it to fit comfortably in the palm and disappear into your pockets or purse. Keep health with this mobile phone with its unique features such as pedometer and burned calories counter. Etiquette Pause offers practical convenience in meetings as the phone automatically turns to mute mode whenever it is turned over. From impromptu snapshots to fun self-portraits, you will always be prepared for any type of photo opportunity with this 2 megapixel phone and 1 hour video recording capabilities. This mini multimedia player is enhanced by Bluetooth and USB 2.0 for fast downloading of music and video files.

Samsung Mobile covers a wide range of consumer needs with the right balance of stylish designs, form factors, and the latest technological features. Be the head-turner, the center of attraction, and the epicenter of music grooves with the Samsung mobile phones.

The Samsung F200 appears to be a cutting-edge music player at first glance but with one flick and swivel, the trendy mobile reveals a host of multimedia and communication functions.



imagine polishing your style.

Finally a phone that blends in with every detail of your look. Designed with a shimmering touch, the Samsung L600 adds depth to your wardrobe and dares you to stand out from the crowd. This twinkling slider phone, Samsung L600 will add flavours to your days.

ph.samsungmobile.com

L600

262K TFT LCD
Music Player (MP3, AAC, AAC+)
Pedometer
FM Radio

2 Megapixel Camera
External Memory : microSD
Image Motion Wallpaper
Bluetooth® 2.0
Lifestyle (Pink Schedule, Shopping List)

Samsung Electronics Philippines Corporation Ground Floor, Bonaventure Plaza, Ortigas Avenue, Greenhills, San Juan, Metro Manila
Samsung Customer Contact Center: TOLL FREE 1-800-10SAMSUNG for PLDT or 1-800-3SAMSUNG for Digitel.

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